The New REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

VOL. XLI NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 1925 NUMBER 528

Contents

The Week 182

Editorials

When Is a Debt Not a Debt?..... 186
Progressivism and the Democrats 188
The Unhappiness of Dr. Butler..... 189

General Articles

The Plea for States' Rights.....Curtis Nettels 191
Seelye of Smith.....Vida D. Scudder 193
Delacroix .....Clive Bell 195
The K K K for Boredom.....Llewellyn Nelson 196
Washington Notes .....T. R. B. 198

A Communication 199

Correspondence 200

Reviews of Books

American Documents.....Robert Morss Lovett 202
Idealism on Demand.....C. E. Ayres 203
Points of View.....Henry B. Fuller 204
Capital Punishment.....M. D. F. 205
Music of the Past.....Mary Ellis Opdycke 206
Grown-Ups and Children.....E. V. 207
The Indian Mind.....Dorothy Bacon Woolsey 207

The Week

SENATOR BORAH once achieved a great success by being the first to demand such a conference on reduction of armament as was held in Washington in 1921. He now seeks to repeat his coup by suggesting that President Coolidge ask for another conference to discuss both armaments and economic questions. The President has promptly let it be known that he is in favor of such a conference, which is no great news, since he has been saying so for many months. He doesn't want economic questions discussed, however. That phrase might drag in the sacred white elephant, the Allied debts to America. The Senator from Idaho intimates that this reservation is satisfactory. Despite the proposed resolution, the President of course will take no action until he knows what Europe will do about the meeting this spring which is contemplated by the terms of the Geneva Protocol. The success both of this Protocol and of the conference under it are still gravely in doubt.

WE heartily applaud the desire of any government official to engage in so laudable an enterprise as a conference on limitation of armament. We recognize, too, that almost any meeting of the powers which does not end in flat failure is better than none. Even the Washington conference, the concrete achievements of which were so partial, so much confined to a type of war machine already semi-obsolete, resulted in an enormous degree of highly desirable "moral disarmament" in the Pacific. At the same time it is impossible to look the facts in the face and hope for any substantial success for a conference on land armament called by America and meeting under conditions prescribed by our general policy in foreign affairs. For reduction of armament is absolutely dependent on creating an alternative means of national security. There is no such means except a comprehensive and continuing plan in which most or all of the chief powers participate, for outlawing war and settling disputes by legal methods. America is still unwilling to play a life-sized part in any such plan. With all the serious imperfections in its present text, there is ten times as much hope for world peace in the Geneva Protocol as in any conference President Coolidge can or will call.

THE foreground of international affairs continues to be filled by the French debts to England and the United States, and our insistence on sharing in German payments under the Dawes plan because of our claim for occupation costs and other damages. The French evidently feel they have gone too far in recent statements of inability and reluctance to pay their debts. All such suggestions, it is now explained, were purely unofficial. The "real" French position is contained in a note to Washington, somewhat hastily drafted, and not made public as we go to press. It is supposed to suggest a ten-year moratorium and payment of the debt over the ensuing eighty years, with a very low rate of interest. More definite is the Chamberlain note to Hughes, denying that we have any legal claim under the Treaty of Berlin on payments made by Germany under the Treaty of Versailles which we refused to sign. This of course sounds more formidable than it is. The British like the French and Americans are trying to establish the strongest position possible as a bargaining ground in the negotiations which must presently begin. In the long run, England would be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

glad to have us share in the Dawes plan payments —in exchange for our reconsidering and moderating the terms under which she is paying her debt to us. France would pay something on her debts to England and America—in exchange for approval of her policy of paying only as Germany does, and in lesser degree. America would reduce the size of the French bill—if our public opinion were educated up to this action, and if we had reason to believe that the smaller total would really be paid. Under the circumstances, the meeting of Allied Finance Ministers in Paris which is beginning as we go to press, and is attended for us by Ambassadors Herrick and Kellogg and Colonel Logan, is like the meeting of boxers' representatives at which articles are signed. The real fight is yet to come.

THE Mussolini government is evidently in sore straits, despite the effort, through an ironclad censorship, to keep the facts from the world. As we go to press, the Fascist dictator has vaguely proclaimed two kinds of martial law—that of the police, and another variety enforced by his black shirt cohorts, whose business it evidently is to terrorize all opposition into inaction. Every paper which refuses to sing the praises of Father Benito has been suppressed. Threats of personal violence against the leaders of the opposition are frequent. Unless all signs fail, publication of the Cesare Rossi memorandum, which proved that Mussolini was personally responsible for the two years' campaign of outrages which culminated in the murder of Matteotti, has given the Fascist régime its coup de grace. To be sure, it has had something to its credit: it ran the trains on time, suppressed open banditry and petty thievery, and brought government income and outgo together. There is such a thing, however, as purchasing these blessings at too high a price. The people of Italy have evidently decided that they have paid quite enough.

IT looks very much as if the crusade against Bolshevism as a criminal conspiracy against social and moral order which was preached with such fervor in 1919 and 1920 would be revived in 1925. It will be revived for two reasons. There are evidences of serious dissensions in the inner circle of the Communist party in Russia. Whether these dissensions indicate a development or a decadence of the leadership which brought success to the Bolshevist revolution we do not know, but any sign of apparent or real weakness in the present Russian government will encourage the Russian émigrés and their friends in Europe to recommence counter-revolutionary plots and agitations. The western European governments have, moreover, been moving recently in the direction of conservatism not to say reaction; and the temptation for conservative governments to charge radical opponents with Bolshevism seems to be irresistible. It is, of course, the more irresistible just in so far as the opposition is powerful and justified. There are several precarious governments in middle Europe resting themselves on violence which will represent an attempt to overthrow them as an explosion of revolutionary socialism. This is particularly true of the Balkans and some of the succession states which are betraying many symptoms of impending convulsions.

HOW completely the present anti-Bolshevist campaign in the Balkans is a mere cloak for more sinister purposes is clearly shown by the action of Jugoslavia. The Croatian Peasant party headed by Radich has been banned, on the flimsy ground that it is linked with the peasants' communist group at Moscow. Its leaders are being arrested as fast as they can be caught. Under this excuse, however, all other opposition parties are also being suppressed. No political meetings of any kind are permitted, and the press is under rigid censorship. As in Italy, this is a sign not of strength but of weakness in the party in power; and the same explanation holds good for the other states in the pan-Balkan anti-Bolshevist alliance. The cock-and-bull stories from Vienna that Czecho-Slovakia has lost the moral leadership of the Little Entente to Jugoslavia—stories which probably have an Italian origin—doubtless have this much foundation: that Masaryk and Benes, possessing the confidence of their people, do not need to trot out a Bolshevist bogey as an excuse for a semi-dictatorship, and therefore refuse to participate in an international league of reactionaries for such purposes.

AN interesting and authentic forecast of what the next war will be like was given in New York City last week at a luncheon of the Foreign Policy Association by a group of close students of aërial and chemical warfare, headed by Brigadier-General Lord Thomson, late chief of the Air Ministry in the Labor government of Great Britain. The consensus of the experts was that in the next war the airplane will be the chief weapon both for offense and defense; that the only real defense will be to attempt to raid the enemy's capital before he raids yours; and that civilians, particularly those living in large cities, will be the first and perhaps the chief casualties. These experts were careful not to indulge in any wild, Sunday-paper sensationalism; but they made it very clear that in their belief trench warfare between professional armies is as extinct as the cross-bow. The future military aim will be to demoralize the enemy by wrecking his chief cities, and particularly his capital, at the earliest possible moment. "A burning charnel house" is the expressive phrase by which Lord Thomson described a city which had been the scene of a successful operation. Reliance will not however be exclusively on gas bombs, the present state of poison gas warfare being somewhat less advanced than is popularly supposed. To kill or disable the whole population of New York or London from the air as things now

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stand, would take a great many planes and a considerable period of time.

IN the coming aërial warfare, gas, incendiary and explosive bombs will all be used. The explosives will wreck buildings, killing many persons in the process. The incendiary bombs will start immense fires which cannot be put out, thereby destroying many more buildings and wrecks of buildings and killing additional members of the population. As to gases, several are available which can be used separately or in combination. Some of them are fatal one hundred percent of the time if they remain on the clothing or skin long enough to burn through and get into the blood stream—a period of a few minutes. Others cause persons who come in contact with them to go blind, either temporarily or permanently. Still others induce unconsciousness over extended periods, or insanity which is usually temporary but in some cases permanent. To be sure, methods of protection against poison gases in general exist. Masks, if used by well-trained soldiers, are fairly adequate, though they would afford no protection against Lewisite, rained from the sky, and there is no safeguard against mustard and other heavy gases of the sort which collect in cellars, subways, etc., except to abandon any place drenched with them for a period which may be as long as a fortnight.

BUT even against ordinary chlorine, which is now regarded as antiquated for military use, it would probably be impossible to protect the inhabitants of a large city. The very minimum requirement for safety is that every inhabitant be provided with an efficient gas mask with replacements from time to time, drilled until he is an expert in its use, and required to have it always available so that it could be adjusted on a few seconds' notice. It is doubtful whether any existing government would be brave enough to advertise its expectation of attack by taking these steps in peacetime—and unless taken then, they would be useless. Even if it were willing, the task is probably humanly impossible. A percentage of the population would be too stupid, or too indifferent to its own welfare, to take the necessary precautions. How large this percentage would be, no one can say; but in a city like New York it would assuredly produce many thousands of casualties in every raid. Even if it did not, the business of life would be almost completely suspended. No one has enough physical strength to go about his affairs wearing a gas mask. Transportation lines would be halted for days if not for weeks. Most effective of all would be the condition of absolute, hysterical terror, to which the whole population would be reduced—a terror which, experience shows, is shared by soldiers from the trenches, and is increased, not diminished, with successive experiences of the same sort. It should be remembered that the conditions herein described are not in the slightest degree the product of anybody's imagination. They are based on inventions already made, and well known. It is in fact likely that the various governments have among them new gases or explosives even more effective. No one knows, because surprise is half the value of any new weapon, and the chemical services of the leading powers guard their secrets with the most desperate care.

A DEBATE has been in progress for some time in military circles as to whether gas warfare is or is not more humane than the use of ordinary high explosive shells, shrapnel, etc. So intelligent a man as J. B. S. Haldane has entered the lists (in the January issue of the Atlantic Monthly) to argue that the proportion of casualties is smaller from gas than shells, that effective gases are possible which leave no permanent ill effects, and that therefore gas warfare does not deserve the bad name which it has received partly from old-fashioned army officers who can't or won't adjust their minds to the new technique. Such discussion seems to us worse than useless, since it diverts attention from the real issue. For some 2100 years, in all wars fought by white men a distinction has been made between belligerents and non-combatants, and of the latter women and children in particular have been safeguarded so far as possible. As the war of 1914-18 grew in bitterness, this distinction was wiped out. In November, 1918, the Allies were preparing to bomb all of the inhabitants of the chief German cities with poison gas. The next war between any two or more of the great powers will undoubtedly begin where the last one left off, or reach that point in a few days' time. Even if gas were only one-half as deadly as shrapnel, the fact that it will be applied to women, children, all stay-at-home civilians, completely alters the old situation. It is all very well to say that such a prospect is so horrible that it will put an end to war, or that the new peril of non-combatants will be an inciting cause to the statesmen to insure peace. We know more today than we did ten years ago about the ability of humankind to endure the unendurable. And we are painfully aware that statesmen usually lack the brains and character to avert catastrophes even when they see them dead ahead. In the face of the facts, it seems the grimmest joke of the ages that "pacifism" is still a thoroughly unpopular doctrine and that any man who tries to warn the people of their danger is more than likely to be laughed out of court.

A RECENT ruling of the Bureau of Internal Revenue with respect to the liability to the income tax of certain classes of municipal employes has the appearance of being extremely arbitrary. Hitherto all municipal, like all state, officials have been treated as exempt from federal income tax on the general ground that the power to tax is the power to destroy. It was considered destructive to the federal Constitution to allow Congress to im-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pose taxes on citizens who were the necessary agents of state governments. The reasoning upon which the exemption of municipal and state officials from the income tax is based is from the economic point of view most doubtful. No tax levied by the federal government on the incomes of state officials would have the slightest tendency to injure the state governments unless it subjected state officials to a tax from which it exempted federal officials and private citizens. The exemption of the income of state and municipal employes has, however, never been successfully disputed. Never that is, until the Internal Revenue Bureau recently decided that Congress could tax the incomes of certain classes of municipal officials. All employes of city-owned services, such as water, light and street railway departments, are subject to federal income tax on their salaries. They have been liable since 1918, and they will now be compelled to file returns and pay taxes for these intervening years.

EMPLOYES of a city water or electric light plant are under the foregoing ruling subject to an income tax, because the city is defined as behaving with respect to such activities in a proprietary rather than a governmental capacity. On the surface this ruling looks like an arbitrary attempt to distinguish between the economic and political functions of a municipal corporation. If the reasoning which is supposed to justify the exemption of state and municipal officials is valid, the ruling means that Congress can tax out of existence municipal economic activities but not municipal political activities. While the decision will form a vexatious complication in the lives of thousands of municipal employes, it will have little economic effect. In all probability it will not avail to discourage the undertaking of municipal activities. Nevertheless it was probably prompted by prejudice against municipal trading. A municipality is a public corporation and the quality of contributing to the public interest appertains theoretically to all its activities. If it is undesirable to prevent Congress from taxing the salary of a policeman or health official, it is equally undesirable to prevent Congress from taxing the salaried officials of a department such as that of water supply, whose operations in the opinion of the municipal authorities are no less necessary to the safeguarding of public health and welfare.

ADMIRAL PALMER, head of the Emergency Fleet Corporation, is trying to put the American merchant marine on a business footing. He believes that he should be given a free hand in the management, operation and disposition of ships and his view is shared by President Coolidge and Senator Jones of Washington, chairman of the Senate Commerce Committee. The President was so anxious to promote this change that he requested the Shipping Board to pass a resolution divorcing itself entirely from the management of the government's shipping affairs. Two resolutions have been passed, one last January and one a few days ago. Neither accomplishes the purpose. Apparently both President Coolidge and Senator Jones have now convinced themselves that it will require an amendment of the Jones Merchant Marine act of 1920 to confine the Board's activities within the limits of general policy-making and to give the Emergency Fleet Corporation unrestricted authority to manage its own business. Consequently the President recommended such a change in the law in his last message to Congress and Senator Jones is drafting the amendment. Why the Shipping Board declined to pass a resolution in the form suggested to them has been explained by Chairman T. V. O'Connor and Admiral Benson. To have done so, Admiral Benson says, would have meant shifting responsibilities and delegating powers which Congress had fixed in the Board itself. It would have violated the trust imposed upon the Board by law, consequently it would have been illegal. Apparently Senator Jones did not know that he was recommending an illegal action when he wrote his memorandum last January.

THE business-like policy President Coolidge has adopted for the merchant marine completely reverses President Harding's. That policy was made by Albert D. Lasker as chairman of the Shipping Board. With him, everything was subordinate to getting a ship-subsidy law passed by Congress. The accepted rules of business were brushed aside. Instead of soliciting freight for the vessels operated by the Board, he announced that the Shipping Board vessels would only carry what was freely offered them. The sale of ships was likewise conducted in such a way as to make an extravagant deficit inevitable. Mr. Lasker ran the whole show, frequently with only a pro forma consultation of the Board, working tooth and nail all the while to get the Ship-Subsidy Act passed. When Congress refused to accede to his demand, which was backed up by President Harding, Mr. Lasker apparently lost interest in the shipping business and shortly after President Coolidge took office, he resigned. The new President reversed the policy of his predecessor. He decided the business must be built up and the deficit cut down pending the time when the whole business could be sold out as a going concern. The Emergency Fleet Corporation is now operating some vessels at a profit and others at a comparatively small loss in the United States Lines. Admiral Palmer figures that the average loss per vessel on all ships operated is $25,000. Representative Edwin L. Davis of Tennessee, whose knowledge of the Shipping Board and Emergency Fleet Corporation probably exceeds that of some of the Board's members, figures that the operating loss of the merchant fleet is now reduced to $5,000,000 a year, and that the other $50,000,000 appropriated has been expended on administration expenses, expense of the laid-up fleet, reconditioning, repairs and other matters not a part of ship operations.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE safety of coal miners is an excellent subject for a governmental new year's resolution. "The frequency of coal mine explosions," says the Associated Press in a recent despatch, "has brought officials to the conclusion that the federal government might properly seek the coöperation of the states in promoting greater safety to coal mine workers." The fact is that coal mining is still a distinctly dangerous occupation. The review of the American Association for Labor Legislation has recently called the attention of its readers to the fact that eight "major" explosions of 1924 took 445 lives. In 1923 265 miners were killed in five such disasters. In 1922 a series of eleven explosions caused the death of 264. The toll for the last decade totals more than 25,000. Some danger is, no doubt, inevitable in the mining of coal. Yet the fact remains that the adoption of safety devices the efficacy of which is recognized by all insurance companies, in particular the use of rock dust, required by law throughout England, is resisted by the mining companies and neglected by state governments. The national conference soon to be called by President Coolidge according to arrangements made by the Bureau of Mines, will pay its way if it does no more than demonstrate that most of the hazards of coal mining are unnecessary.

Mr. C. E. Ayres and Mr. George Soule have joined the editorial board of the New Republic.

When is a Debt not a Debt?

THE French Finance Minister's frank expression of the way in which Frenchmen actually regard the French war debt to the United States has provoked some plain speaking in Washington. It looks just now as if the American government might in the end discourage further borrowing in the American market by the citizens or the governments of all countries which had not offered to fund their debts to the United States on acceptable terms. But whatever the final result the disagreeable incident has precipitated a more attentive consideration of the problem of the inter-allied war debts. It is surely desirable that such a consideration should take place. There are many conflicting interests to be adjusted, and it will take a long time to adjust them. The economic and political problems created by these debts are almost as difficult as the problem of German reparations. The anger, the bitterness, the obloquy, the misunderstanding and the recriminations which are aroused by their discussion is born of an analogous discrepancy between imperative human needs and the economic values and institutions of modern civilization.

According to the prevailing legal and ethical principles property is property without very much regard for the purpose which it serves, and a debt is a debt no matter what the conditions under which it was incurred or what the consequences are of paying it. France and Italy incurred their debts to the United States and Great Britain for the purchase at inflated war prices of war material which was immediately consumed. It is obviously unsound finance to spend borrowed money on consumers' goods purchased at high prices. If modern capitalist nations propose to indulge in war, they should on their own principles pay for their extravagance by conscripting wealth and labor and by manufacturing goods just as they manufacture soldiers. Instead they borrow in any way that they can, bringing about inflation and profiteering as the result of borrowing, and impose on the future productivity of their people the burden of paying for their misfortunes or mismanagement. The evils of financing wars by loans are grave enough when the money is borrowed at home, but they become intolerable and impossible when the money is borrowed by one government and loaned to another. Such obligations are embarrassing to repudiate. France has already written off a substantial part of her internal debt by inflating the franc. Considering her difficulties it might seem fair to scale down to the same extent her debts to the United States and Great Britain, but the matter looks different from the point of view of the American and British governments. They are paying the full interest on these debts to their own domestic creditors. Repudiation would impose on British and American industry and labor the burden of partly feeding and munitioning the French people during the war irrespective of how egotistically the French government used the power which victory conferred upon it.

The difficulty of a settlement between France and the United States is much increased by their differing relations to Great Britain. The latter country is both a creditor and a debtor with respect to her associates in the war. It was in Great Britain's interest to strain every nerve to pay her debts for two reasons. If she did not pay, she could not hope to collect, and neither could she hope to regain the international financial standing from which she had profited so much in the past. She could not afford to lose the reputation of a scrupulously honest merchant. Consequently she signed a contract with the United States which was equivalent to paying in full. Her financial policy previous to and during the war, which had been much sounder than that of France and Italy, provided her with the means of paying. It was a costly but a magnificent act of economic statesmanship, which was soon effective in restoring British prestige. Yet it actually increased the difficulties of a general adjustment of the inter-allied war debts. For it encouraged American politicians to believe that they could negotiate a bargain with France and Italy almost as good as that which Great Britain accepted; and it imposed on France the alternative either of promising to pay more to her creditors than she is capable of paying

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or else of accepting the humiliating position of a second rate financial power with doubtful credit.

France will have to make her choice soon. Unless she offers an acceptable settlement in the near future, the next Congress will undoubtedly force the issue; and in forcing the issue it will probably act for the good of both the French and the American peoples. There seems to be no other way of enlightening them as to the realities of their financial relationship. France cannot pay, does not seriously propose to pay and in our opinion is justified in not paying, but she will not admit any of this if she can help it, and there is now much to be gained by forcing the admission from her. The disagreeable confession is necessary to the ultimate emancipation of France from the impossible obligation and to the future curtailment, in our opinion desirable, of her prestige in Europe. It is time for Americans to recognize that France cannot and does not intend to pay any but a small proportion of her debt to this country and for Frenchmen to accept the consequences of their default. At present the interest on the original debt is rolling up and it will continue to roll up until the two governments reach a settlement. The more it rolls up the more it dissipates the value of the whole reckoning. At present also both the French government and minor French public bodies and corporations are borrowing money in this country. The interest on these new loans will necessarily absorb French balances abroad which otherwise might be used for paying something on the original debt. It is desirable that this borrowing should cease. France cannot have it both ways. Assuming that she cannot pay the debt, she is justified in pleading incompetence and in asking to have her liabilities reduced. But in that event she can hardly expect to borrow more money abroad until the reorganization of her domestic finances is complete and until she gives her creditors some indication of how much she proposes or feels able to pay.

The proposal by M. Clementel that the principles of the Dawes plan be applied to France is itself a confession of bankruptcy. It is an admission that France's legal obligations exceed her ability to meet them and that she requires at least an extension of time from her creditors. It is an admission, also, that even though France could collect sufficient taxes in francs to pay part of the interest on the debt, she might not be able to transfer her francs to London or Washington without depreciating her currency—a consideration which renders it very undesirable that she should for the present increase her indebtedness. Of course M. Clementel is asking for delay on another pretext. German reparations constitute a considerable part of French assets, and until France learns how much she can collect from Germany she has no way of calculating how much she can pay her own creditors. This is true, and it furnishes a perfectly valid reason for demanding a moratorium and for delaying a final settlement until experience indicates the size of the crop which the Dawes plan has planted. But if the French ask for and obtain these concessions, as they should, it is only fair for them on their part to recognize that they have already partially repudiated their obligations. They have not only partially repudiated, but they are proposing to make future payments contingent, not on exceptional exertions or sacrifices on their part, but on their ability to collect from Germany. Although they are justified in claiming these exemptions, they are not justified in claiming immunity from the consequences of their own default.

If a private corporation asked for a similar extension of time on the ground of inability to pay and the necessity of realizing slowly on its assets, its creditors would throw it into bankruptcy and administer its affairs. That is the real meaning of the Dawes plan as imposed on Germany. The plan implies not only the emancipation from any liability to pay more than she is able to pay, but also the acceptance by her of an experimental financial receivership which will set up an impartial tribunal to decide how much she is able to pay. Of course, M. Clementel, when he suggested a Dawes plan for France, was not proposing to confer on any non-French commission the right to say how much France can and shall pay. No nation would propose or accept such a limitation of its independence except as the result of utter helplessness. But if her creditors must and should grant a prolonged moratorium to France for the ostensible purpose of allowing her to realize on foreign assets in which they also are interested, they are surely justified in taking probably effective precautions to prevent those assets from being dissipated.

According to dominant British and American opinion, it is French policy towards Germany which more than anything else has in the past diminished Germany's ability to pay. If that policy is continued, it is certain within twenty years to embroil Europe in a war which will make it impossible for European governments to meet either their domestic or their foreign obligations. The only method which the creditors can use to bring pressure to bear on France or to modify her policy is to fasten on her the consequences of her default and discourage her from further borrowing. France cannot really afford to play the preponderant part for which she has cast herself in Europe. She will have to pay for her continued performances of it with borrowed money. We trust that money will not come from America. It would be deplorable to collect from the French against their will any part of their debt to the American government, but it would be no less deplorable for American finance to do for France what French finance before the war did for Russia. The most effective way to discourage French imperialism is to deny to the French access to the American money market until she makes some attempt to pay the war debt and until she allows Germany a chance to recover.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Progressivism and the Democrats

OFFICIAL returns for last November's election have now been published. They show that Mr. Coolidge received 15,718,789 votes, Mr. Davis 8,378,962 and Senator La Follette 4,822,319. Mr. Coolidge's margin over his Democratic opponent was therefore 7,339,827, larger by 334,980 than was Mr. Harding's in 1920.

Studying the La Follette vote and comparing it with that of Mr. Roosevelt in 1912, the New York World comes to some interesting conclusions. It finds on computing the percentage of the total vote obtained in each case, that

> bolting as Mr. Roosevelt bolted, and carrying the Socialist endorsement which in 1912 favored Mr. Debs, Mr. La Follette in 1924 polled less than half the share of the national vote that went to Roosevelt and Debs in 1912. His percentage of the total is 16.7. Roosevelt and Debs had 33.9 between them; Roosevelt alone, 27.8 percent.

The World then goes on to show that the new Progressive party exhibited its strength in the same parts of the country where the old one was strongest and that La Follette ran far behind the Roosevelt percentage in every section. Moreover, the World charges that the La Follette vote was so "spotty"—ranging from 9.9 percent for New England to 23 percent in the wheat belt and 32.9 on the Pacific Coast—that 1924 progressivism stands revealed as

> a movement making its appeal essentially to local blocs and on local issues . . . to date there is not the structure of a national party here. There is only a grand alliance of congenial factions.

We have no wish to minimize the seriousness of the situation the World sets forth regarding the smallness of the La Follette vote. We were disappointed with the showing made by the Progressives in 1924, and that disappointment is not lessened by careful analysis of the final result. We believe it is unfair, however, to compare the La Follette results with those achieved by Roosevelt in 1912, and argue therefrom that Progressivism has necessarily lost ground in America in the past twelve years.

For the Roosevelt vote in 1912 was by no means made up exclusively of genuine progressives. If no other evidence existed, the support of men like Frank A. Munsey and George W. Perkins would be sufficient guarantee of that fact. Roosevelt was the most popular political personality of a generation, if not indeed of our whole history. His popularity was only very partially based on his progressivism—real or imaginary. Undoubtedly many thousands of those who proudly called themselves Bull Moosers in 1912 regarded the La Follette campaign of 1924 with horror as being ultra-radical. The 1912 split in the Republican National Convention came over personalities, not issues; and in the Roosevelt ranks were included all—and they were numerous—who had any reason to be disgruntled with the Taft machine, from any point of view.

To his personal popularity Roosevelt added two other advantages neither of which was available to La Follette. He had been President of the United States for nearly eight years, and possessed both the great prestige which inheres in that office and the nationwide organization which every President automatically builds up. He had also very large financial resources, while the La Follette-Wheeler forces in 1924 were badly handicapped by poverty.

To these factors which help account for the good showing made by Roosevelt in 1912 must be added at least one which accounts for the comparatively poor showing of La Follette in 1924. The Progressivism of 1912 was after all a pretty mild variety. The platform called for the direct primary, woman's suffrage, the initiative, referendum and recall, a lower tariff, restrictions on injunctions in labor disputes, a parcels post system, and the like. Roosevelt did not receive the Socialist support, likely in America to prove a deadly incubus. The Russian communist experiment still lay in the future and the Bolshevist bogey, which the reactionaries find so convenient, had not yet been invented. Economic pressure such as was applied to thousands of workingmen in 1924 to force a vote for Coolidge was used little or not at all. When we consider all these factors, for La Follette, under the handicaps he suffered, to poll more than one-half the percentage secured by Roosevelt can only be reckoned as a very considerable achievement.

There is another aspect of the question raised by the World which deserves thoughtful consideration. That paper has long and steadfastly urged that since a third party has "no hope" of winning an election, persons of progressive views would be well advised to enroll under the Democratic banner, capturing command of the party if they can. We have no desire to adopt a tu quoque argument; but certainly neither the immediate record of the party nor its history during the past fifty years gives any reason to be optimistic over its future ability to enroll a majority of the voters.

From Roosevelt to La Follette represents a decline in percentage from 27.8 to 16.7; but from Wilson in 1912 to Davis in 1924 also represents a decline in percentage, from 48 to 28. If the solid South be eliminated as it fairly may since much of the Southern Democracy does not represent a political conviction but an hereditary quarrel, the percentage becomes: Wilson 38, Davis 25. Mr. Harold Rountree has pointed out that since 1860 the Democratic party has never had a majority of the total vote and has had a plurality only once, in 1912. The almost steady decline in the proportion of the total vote of the party (exclusive of the solid South) is most striking. In 1876 it was 47 percent. By 1884 it was 45, and by 1900, 42. Thereafter it reads:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

	Percent
1904	34
1908	40
1912	38
1916	46
1920	30
1924	25

The weakness of the Democratic party in 1924 is even more clearly revealed if the vote for Davis be analyzed sectionally. In the far West, he received less than two-thirds as many votes as La Follette. In the Middle West, his vote was still slightly smaller, in the East it was about twice as great. La Follette ran second in California, Idaho, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington and Wyoming. Davis ran third in each of these states and also in Wisconsin where he got less than 10 percent of the vote cast. If we must still admit the existence of a solid South rigidly devoted to the Democratic party, we must also admit that there is a solid West in which that party is today only a vestigial remnant. To be sure, a party can sometimes come back. Conservative Republicanism in 1912 secured only eight electoral votes—those of Utah and Vermont—and yet lived to achieve 404 in 1920. What reason is there to believe that the northern Democracy will not some day be able to equal this achievement?

We have already hinted at the reason. It is because the real issue dividing the American people today creates an alignment which leaves the Democratic party no battleground. The division is between conservative and progressive, and the Democratic party is in fact neither—or rather, in its membership, it is both. Thousands of northern Democrats voted for Coolidge because Davis wasn't conservative enough for them. Thousands more voted for La Follette because Davis wasn't progressive enough for them. A comparison of the Coolidge figures with those of Harding in 1920 in the states west of the Mississippi and north of the fortieth parallel of latitude shows that the La Follette campaign drew many more votes from Democratic than from Republican sources.

The northern Democratic vote, in other words, and especially its more active and intelligent element, is splitting two ways. Its conservative wing is tending to join the party which has now become the real seat of conservatism, the Coolidge Republicans. Its progressive wing has already begun to go over to the group which was headed by La Follette in the late campaign. That movement, we believe, will be accentuated in the future.

Naturally, there is a temptation for liberal leaders in the Democratic party, such as the New York World, to urge all progressives to get together, capture the Democracy, and give battle to the conservatives with the aid of a conscript army from the solid South—that South which provided even Mr. Davis with 1,900,000 votes. Such an alliance seems to us extremely undesirable, and for two reasons. First, it would be founded on a lie. The South is not progressive. It actually gave Mr. Coolidge 900,000 votes, nearly a third of its total, in 1924. Its industrial development which today is strikingly like that of New England seventy-five years ago, is rapidly breeding men possessing the same general type of conservatism. And in the second place, capturing the party is impossible. Its national conventions have at least the merit of being, except for the northern delegations, unbossed. It chooses its leaders on its own terms, and whether they are progressive or not is an accident or an after-thought, with the chances all against it. After June, 1924, it takes a rash man to talk of capturing the party. In that year, the Democrats had it in their power, as they very well knew, to say whether there should be a third party movement. Yet they hardly gave the matter a thought but plunged ahead, producing a platform and candidate of such a character as to make the election of Coolidge a certainty, even if it had not already been so.

The beginning of a progressive party which now exists in this country is, we concede, small. But at least it is genuine. As honesty goes in politics, it is unusually honest, and will be more so when it has freed itself of some minor extraneous elements by which it is still hampered. Perhaps it will need to fight for a long time before it becomes a majority party. That is not a calamity; the curse of American politics is the itch for immediate temporal power. An aggressive minority group in opposition can accomplish a great deal, sometimes even more than if it assumes office. Such an opportunity to exert moral pressure would be thrown away if an unreal and equivocal bargain were made with the Democrats, the only object of which would be to secure office at once, under circumstances which would make effective government almost impossible.

The Unhappiness of Dr. Butler

AT some future time when the world has grown wiser, the hundred neediest cases for whom aid and sympathy are asked at the Christmas season, will not be composed of those suffering merely material and physical ills. It will be realized that spiritual misery is the truly heart-rending form of need, and that its victims have the greatest claim upon human sympathy. When that time comes, it is probable that the name of Nicholas Murray Butler will head the list of the world's greatest sufferers. It would be impossible to find better proof of the callous harshness of the world than the fact that his cries of anguish arouse so little compassion, even though they appear annually at just the season when the rest of the world is exchanging merry and happy greetings. Think what it must cost his overburdened soul to expose its spiritual woes, and then ask what reception attends the exhibition! Com-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment, yes; commendation, by all means; occasionally, even criticism. But sympathy adequate to the spectacle? Never.

The call for pity has rarely been uttered with less reserve than in the annual report of the President of Columbia University just released to the press. Here are its elements baldly stated. On the one hand, there is the University itself. During the last year of his incumbency it had a student body of thirty-two thousand seven hundred and sixty-nine human bodies—would that one could say souls! And this after conscientiously deducting almost three thousand names for double registration. Since Dr. Butler has been president, some fifty-five million dollars have been added to the funds of the various corporations included in the University; the present resources of these institutions are almost one hundred million dollars; the budget appropriations for the last academic year were over six millions. A facile and superficial public, impervious to the annual warnings and rebukes of Dr. Butler, might suppose there were in these facts some grounds for good cheer.

But in truth they only furnish the dark frame for a picture of gloom. For the situation of the universe is one of "colossal and steadily increasing ignorance. The endeavor of education to keep pace with the rapidly growing ignorance appears to be quite hopeless." "If Abelard came back" (the caption of one section of the report, and what a title for a movie!) he would be "confronted with the spectacle of countless numbers of men and women, all hugely pleased with the brightness of their own intellectual illumination, whose minds are blocked to the progress of reason by the barriers of prejudice and fanatical prepossession." Dr. Butler is here, even if Abelard cannot come back—unless the American Magazine should take up his case—and he is confronted by this spectacle. As a vicarious Abelard, even worse things meet his vision. Abelard conquered scholastic realism in vain. "There is a whole scheme of social and political philosophy and an elaborate program of social and political action based upon the ancient fallacy" which he thought he had destroyed. What this philosophy and this scheme are is not specified; it is held that there is a common good and interest which is not that of the individuals who make up a given community. So it is probable that this is a veiled thrust at the protective tariff policy of the party to which the worthy and sad Doctor nominally belongs.

The more one "confronts" the growing number of students and the amount of money devoted to education on one side and the rising tide of ignorance on the other, the sadder will one be, especially if one is the head of the institution doomed to conduct such a losing fight. There would be some relief to the gloom if Dr. Butler could find consolation by withdrawing from the world without into a different world within University walls. But, alas! consolation is not found that way. Those who con-

[illegible] mediocrity to excellence would confine the activities of the superior man to mere university administration when the universe at large and the United States in particular are in such dire need of masterful leadership.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

PUBLISHED WEEKLY AND COPYRIGHT, 1925, IN THE U. S., BY THE NEW REPUBLIC, INC., 421 WEST 21ST STREET, NEW YORK HERBERT CROLY, PRESIDENT, ROBERT HALLOWELL, SECRETARY AND PUBLISHER, DANIEL MEBANE, TREASURER

EDITORS

HERBERT CROLY BRUCE BLIVEN ROBERT LITTELL
ALVIN JOHNSON C. E. AYRES GEORGE SOULE
ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS

JANE ADDAMS JOHN DEWEY R. H. TAWNEY
DAVID FRIDAY H. N. BRAILSFORD LEO WOLMAN

RATES: SINGLE COPIES, FIFTEEN CENTS; YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, FIVE DOLLARS; CANADIAN, FIVE DOLLARS AND FIFTY CENTS; FOREIGN, SIX DOLLARS; THREE MONTHS' TRIAL, ONE DOLLAR

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tates' Rights

This opposition to the expanding power of the national government is perhaps the outstanding feature of political thought in the United States of 1924. If all important political theories are the outgrowth of actual conditions, what are the conditions that explain the current state of mind? First, the hostility of men of wealth to proposals for benefitting the farmer and railroad workers through federal action—action to be financed by taxes on large incomes. Hence arises a double-headed attitude among the very well-to-do—their insistence upon reduced taxes and their emphasis upon states' rights in order to prevent taxation of hitherto exempt state bonds. Second, the anti-prohibition sentiment, with its revival of the locality-self-rule plan. And again, the propaganda of the child-employing manufacturers pointing out that the states may lose their heritage of self-government if they yield control over local factories to Congress. These are not the only forces working against the centralizers, but they are, perhaps, the nain ones, the ones most effective at the pres-nt time.

What is the prospect for returning to the conditions which made the doctrine of states' rights a valuable one for its time? During the past forty years a national consciousness has been replacing the old-time popular loyalty to the states. One cause of this change is the new mobility of life led by most Americans. So much moving about as is done in the American family does not enable people to form deep attachments to state governments, and causes them to feel that they are too temporarily settled to warrant their becoming acquainted with the intricacies of state politics. This is not a small matter when it is remembered how migratory is the laboring class in the United States, and how many people work for corporations which move them about from town to town as if they were players on a chess-board. The prospect for advancement to thousands of Americans means changing their place of residence; we have to choose between permanent homes and better positions. The latter at present have the stronger pull with most of us. The change in city housing that has come with the triumph of rented apartments over homes is a significant recognition of the accelerating mobility of American life.

Another effect of the economic changes is worth a moment's notice. A principal feature of the lives of most Americans is that their experience is no longer conformable to special local patterns, but instead to a national pattern. The people of the various states as a whole no longer have peculiar ways of doing things—peculiar customs and amusements. In occupation and profession the processes of production are so standardized that a workman from Georgia may go to Iowa and continue his labors without inconvenience. The food that people eat, the clothes they wear, the things they read, the entertainments to which they turn are no longer home-made, having a peculiar local flavor, and distinct from those in other localities or states. Now these things all come from great national plants, and life is lived in California as it is in New York. This appalling standardization of all the articles of consumption—physical, emotional and intellectual—is having a tremendous effect upon the consciousness of the American people. It is breaking down their provincialism, destroying their awareness of existence in separate communities, causing them to lose pride in their state attachments.

Why should a person be peculiarly proud of Illinois when people are living in the same way in Ohio, Indiana and Missouri? They eat the same kind of food, go to the same movies, read essentially the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

same papers, wear clothes of the same style, and what not. The consciousness that develops from this similarity of habits and conditions is not local; it is national. Only at the national boundaries does the manner of life change and only here can Americans see that they are different from their neighbors. Seemingly, it requires contrasts and peculiarities before a group of people will feel politically self- conscious. Before the days of rapid transit and large circulations, the state was the group which bound Americans together; now the nation is the unit, and states are tending to lose their former marks of distinction.

Even before the time of the economic revolution, forces were at work to make the United States over into a unified nation. A principal one of these forces has been the influence of states added to the Union since the early part of the nineteenth century. These states were carved out of the public domain; they started their careers as but infants in wealth and population; they drew their settlers from other parts of the United States, and in so doing attracted men who did not lose their attachment to the Union during the period when they were without affection for their newly-adopted state. These states have been younger than the nation; they have been weaker, they have lacked traditions, history, and self-consciousness; and in the absence of state legacies they made the glory of the nation their own. The nation has so far overshadowed the single state in the West that the power and importance of the latter, even to its own inhabitants, have always seemed small compared with those of the former.

Thus the economics and the psychology of our time threaten the vitality of popular loyalty to the states. The actual facts of the modern world are changing our attitude and our habits—are weaving the many state types and traits into a national pattern. Is this transformation likely to stop? Not unless we forget the secret of the locomotive, of the wireless, of the cinema, and of the printing-press. Not unless the progress of science is arrested and we go back to the habits of our grandfathers.

What then, is the plea for states rights really worth? Many concerns of life may best be regulated by community action—and the state provides a convenient grouping of the communities for general supervision. Education, sanitation, justice—these and many other things are primarily local in character. The schools and the law courts for instance are isolated, self-contained units. Each one of them in a given locality may and indeed is very likely to have some relation with similar units elsewhere, but its very life is not dependent upon that relation. If the schools of New York were to close up for a year, the schools of Wisconsin would not be gravely affected. Since these detached institutions do not affect other like units in a vital way they do not call for a national plan of control.

But the economic threats of a community do not end at its borders; they are national in their extent. The dependence of localities upon the outside for markets and raw materials or food is a settled condition of modern America. This dependence arises from diverse locations of natural resources and from a haphazard distribution of the motive power which is used for turning these resources into finished products.

Broadly speaking, there are these two kinds of human concerns—one self-sustaining within a given community; one dependent for its vitality on outside conditions and contacts. The former are simple in character, and may be supervised by local agencies; the latter are complex and may be best regulated by national machinery. The state supplies a convenient area for grouping the independent social units so as to procure the economy and interchange of ideas that come through proper coördination and central control.

But the state is not well fitted for regulating the economic concerns of its citizens. This being the case, no other reason exists why the states should be made the agents of economic control. They have so far declined in the popular affections and estimation that they are no longer the means by which the people can best express themselves politically. Their one-time vitality as governing units sprang from popular interest in their traditions and loyalty to their authority. As that loyalty and that interest have declined—to that extent has the reason for emphasizing their rights in opposition to the federal power been weakened. If we, as a people, are being moulded into a national type, and are losing those peculiarities that spring from life in detached localities, we will not be likely to express ourselves politically through instruments which cannot cope with our hardest and most vital problems and which do not hold the first place in our affections.

Assuming that this is true—then the question of political control of economic practices is whether the nation is to exercise the control or whether such regulation should be attempted at all. The national agencies, by reason of their extent and because of the nationalistic tinge to our political emotions, are the logical agencies for the work. The effort to prevent national regulation on the plea of states' rights is really an attempt to perpetuate laissez faire. The decision lies, not between state regulation or national regulation, but between national control or no control. If laissez faire is the best policy, then well and good, but it should be adopted by the nation directly and openly, and not on the deceiving supposition that we can return to state control, and go back to the days before rapid transit and standardized production on national lines.

CURTIS NETTELS.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Seelye of Smith

COMMENCEMENT time, 1924. Hundreds of women, many white-haired, fantastically dressed, stand gaily ranged on either side of the walk laid in the green of the campus. At the end are massed the waiting seniors—graver than the alumnæ—in black caps and gowns, carrying each a long-stemmed rose. Hush: and slowly, oh, so slowly, with slightly uncertain step, comes down the walk a slender, dignified figure, the noble, aged face shining with inner light, and turning to his "beloved alumnæ" the smile which blessed their youth. "President Seelye, hail to you!" The song wavers down the line. Many are crying. He is reviewing for the last time, as was feared, as it proved, his College daughters. . . .

A graduate of the first class of 1879 is in that welcoming line. On that day, eleven young women, in the staid costume of the period, had received their diplomas in the staid old Social Hall. They had listened to a Commencement address by President Eliot; and, truth to tell, had not liked it very well. For the president of Harvard, then as now a notable personage, gave hesitant approval to the brave experiment: proffered doubts as to the reaction of studying Greek on the health of young ladies; as to their power of studying it, anyway. President Seelye, in whose mind that address always rankled a little, must have enjoyed showing President Eliot the College at the inauguration of President Neilson.

For it is a great story, that of Smith College, and Dr. Seelye was a great educator. He never had the advantage of intimacy with our latter day theories. I don't believe his mind ever delved into psychologic intricacies in quest of educational methods or ideals. To him as to most men of his day, education involved much imposition of disciplines, and he would have been startled at the idea that it consisted mainly in the removal of inhibitions. But vital education will always be better than its own idea of itself. President Seelye acted on Browning's words:

> To know
> Rather consists in opening out a way
> Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape
> Than in effecting entry for a light
> Supposed to be without.

Perhaps some modern teachers hardly realize the sternness of the process by which that deep splendor can be released from the pettier impulses which choke it. Dr. Seelye saw education demanding a firm hand from the teacher and much submission to the distasteful and the boresome on the part of the student. But his faith in that inward splendor was all sustaining. Confident that every human being possessed it alike, he did a simple thing, big enough to occupy the life of one man. He devoted himself, with a singleness of purpose which as his successor said at his funeral, is a rare source of strength in these complicated days, to removing the obstacles from the mental life of women. Happy in his professorship at Amherst, he had hesitated to accept the call to the Presidency of the imperfectly equipped nascent college. His decision made, there was no faltering; and one need only read the quaint and varied objections to his aim and method which were presented from various sources in the early years, to realize what sense of knightly adventure inspired him.

He turned away deliberately from educational experiments, and brought women's education, for the first time in New England, sharply into line with that of men. "No way to disabuse the popular mind of the impression that a women's college must be of an inferior intellectual type seemed more effectual than to adopt the prevailing requirements for admission in the New England colleges." Later, he went on, modifications might prove wise; but "no differentiation could safely be made at the outset in the intellectual work demanded, if the college standards of scholarship were to be respected and maintained." He gave women the chance to keep pace with men on men's own ground, and they promptly proceeded to take advantage of their opportunity. Probably he was right in thinking that not to initiate but to equalize was the need of the hour; to attack that task as he did took doughty courage and perseverance.

What pleasant trails they were, those old ones long trodden by masculine feet, which girlish footsteps now explored! President Seelye was strong on the classics: "The study of the Latin and Greek languages will be pursued as extensively as in any other college," ran the prospectus. And the inaugural: "Let us have less grammar and more Greek, less writing Greek verse, and more study of Greek poetry, but let us not in our higher institutions of learning give up the study of that language which more speedily than any other ushers us into the best thinking of the ages." To a girl of those days, the study of Greek was as thrilling as escape from the classics is now. "Enteuthen exelaunai . . . parasangas eikosi," the cryptic words sent a shiver down her spine, sign to her that she was no longer shut out from the sanctuary of learning.

President Seelye bravely started the college without a preparatory department, and stood firm while applicants were few. Only sixteen for the second class, and the first year the entire college could go over to South Hadley in an omnibus! But before long, faith was justified. And the policies as the college developed were finely liberal. A free elective

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

system, in line with that at Harvard, was a distinct advance on the old hard and fast curricula; when a more correlated scheme was needed, it was worked out flexibly. Smith has been singularly little oppressed by the dead hand of its own traditions. If the foundations of the college were laid on an accredited base, the structure could be enriched indefinitely; and here came in the chance for innovations. Art, music, had honored places from the first; though it was only in the first decade of the college that Oxford took the bold step of welcoming a Professor of Fine Arts named John Ruskin. The social sciences entered Smith early. Those were days when the much abused adjective "social" was identified with "sociable" in people's minds; but when President Seelye in 1881 introduced the young teacher, J. B. Clark, fresh from contacts with German scholars, he opened to students a new field which speedily proved to have bewildering possibilities and problems. Philosophy under Stuart Phelps and presently under Gardiner was well abreast of modern thought. The President's Bible lectures, though irreverent youth scoffed at them, are seen in retrospect to have been unusual for the time in their frank presentation of criticism which he often did not himself accept. No one ever found these lectures disturbing —perhaps because they were delivered with the suave and precise intonations that always marked his delivery.

It is a great advantage for a pioneer to have, so to speak, a conservative personality. That advantage was Dr. Seelye's: his very presence bore unconscious witness to traditional values, and he did audacious and unconventional things in a scrupulously conventional manner. An old-time courtesy, imparting almost an eighteenth century flavor to his address, was in piquant contrast to his forward-looking mind. There was something at once delicate and virile about him: he moved, with the distinction of the aristocrat, in an atmosphere a little remote, despite his friendly simplicity. This same peculiar charm, one learns, was his even as a lad; but he was of that fine type which is most at home in middle age. The cheerful informalities of a later generation would have been impossible to him; he did not inspire fear, at least as he mellowed with the years, but he did inspire reverence. His English was exquisite. "I abruptly avow," said President Eliot in that famous Commencement address, "that I find recognized but one mental acquisition as an essential part of the education of a lady or gentleman—namely an accurate and refined use of the mother tongue." There is not much point in telling young people that, but there is point in exposing them to beautiful speech, and the pure, individual and musical cadences of President Seelye were perhaps the chief asset of the College. It was a treat of which one never wearied to hear him read the Scriptures, or to listen to the ever-recurrent phrases, of his own coining yet liturgical through repetition, in which he led the College devotions. The prayer offered at his funeral was one of his own.

"Gentlewomen" was a word he loved, and nobody was hurt by hearing it often. Disciplines in the old days were rather intellectual than social: there were rules, of course, and in these self-governing times students would be nervously engaged in tinkering them. But we, being firmly governed, were extremely free in our minds, and it didn't fuss us much to go to bed at ten, though sometimes we calmly didn't do it. It was taken for granted that one would be a lady, and one was. There came a terrible episode, to be sure, when the President sent a girl home from that sedate "walk-around," the Washington's Birthday festivity, because she was "dressed too low": and frankness recalls the edict, later revoked, when Amherst boys came to serenade, that maidens in fascinating negligée must not lean from lighted windows showering flowers: wherefore those serenaders were greeted by darkness and silence. But grievances were few. The President and his faculty proceeded not by edict but by assumption. They created an atmosphere of gracious culture, not by what they ordained but by what they were.

Meanwhile, the man who provided this rich, flexible and spontaneous living was as shrewd a financier as ever occupied a Presidential chair. Students were as unconscious of financial matters as plants of the soil in which they grow, but the President was paying a great deal of attention to them. And the College flourished amazingly in material ways. His story of its growth—rather a chronicle than a history, as he truly and modestly says—records the gifts which contributed to this development, but cannot suggest the confidence he inspired, his admirable business sense, his honorable acquisition and able handling of funds. For what could not be said of Wordsworth's Dion was true here:

> Him only him the shield of Jove defends
> Whose means are pure and spotless as his ends.

His career, never touched by cynical impeachment, refutes fears lest successful business methods be of necessity incompatible with nicety of honor. President Seeleye's fine unworldliness, his sense of the higher realities, was in no wise impaired by his brilliant financial achievements. The whole man was luminously one, an integrated personality. For this reason if for no other he deserves a shining place among the educators and the citizens of America.

But what the alumnae will remember longest is his voice, in morning prayers and in the Commencement Scripture: "So stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. . . . Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice."

VIDA D. SCUDDER.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Delacroix

So impressive is his position in the history of modern art that it is difficult to judge Delacroix on his merits. Undeniably they are great; yet I cannot rate them quite so high as they are rated by contemporary French opinion. He seems to be a good but hardly a great artist. On the other hand, he is certainly one of the pillars of nineteenth century painting; while at the age of thirty, or less, he was recognized by friends and foes alike as chief of the romantic school. This honor he neither coveted nor enjoyed: to the end of his days he disclaimed the title of "romantic," and so far was he from ambitioning the rôle of chief that he refused even to open a studio.

If I do not call him great, that is because his pictures do not move me as do those of the great. Maybe my sensibility is at fault; all I can say is that to me his forms and colors never give what those of Ingres or Courbet or Renoir or Matisse, for instance, give often—the grand thrill of ecstasy and surprise. They seem to lack that magical beauty, implicit perhaps in the forms of nature, but only to be evoked by great artists—that beauty which, without the revelation of the masters, had remained to most unknown, that always surprising and never quite explicable beauty which works of art alone can offer, and which, whenever experienced, adds a new and exciting ingredient to that queer mixture men call life. The pictures of Delacroix seem to add nothing; they do but refer the mind back to things already experienced. That these things are of the subtlest and most exquisite goes without saying; but the appreciation of them is a work of collaboration, not the enjoyment of a divine gift fallen mysteriously from the skies.

Delacroix's art is essentially literary; for literary qualities it was admired during his life, and for them in my opinion—an opinion which will vex I fear some of our best critics—it has been admired ever since. When I say that he was literary I do not mean that he was coarsely so in the manner beloved of the people. Look at that picture in the National Gallery of the Magdalene setting out to visit the tomb by Savoldo. It is fine painting, as is most of Delacroix's work, but its appeal is not purely, nor mainly even, plastic, not chiefly for its line and color is it so greatly, and so justly admired. The Magdalene is unmistakably a "fille repentie." An instinctive coquettishness appears beneath the decent grey cloak which instinct, lying inoffensive but alert, has arranged so prettily; while the gracious gesture with which she holds it up betrays a refined but unsubdued temperament. Also, though she is going in all reverence and humility to the tomb of her divine master, one cannot but feel, as one is meant to feel, that she has something the air of going to a rendezvous. The theme could be elaborated were elaboration to the purpose: it is not, because here I am concerned only to illustrate what I mean by the better sort of "literariness." Such literariness, unless I mistake, is the quality in which Delacroix excelled, and for which he was, and is, most admired.

His magnificent champion, Baudelaire, was, though he tried sometimes to conceal the fact from himself, in his heart under no illusions. Always it is for subtle literary qualities that he praises his hero most convincingly:

> Another quality, very great, very grand, of M. Delacroix's talent, and one which makes him the painter best loved by poets, is that he is essentially literary. Not only has his painting travelled, always with success, over the field of the highest literatures, not only has it visited Ariosto, Byron, Dante, Walter Scott, Shakespeare, but it knows how to reveal ideas of a higher order, finer, and deeper than most modern paintings.

He adds that at the master's funeral, the chief mourners were men of letters. Gœthe's fine compliment was provoked by the literary qualities of his illustrations: "I must admit," says the sage to Eckermann on November 29th, 1826, "that myself I had not represented the scene (Faust and Mephistopheles galloping past the gibbet) so perfectly." He goes on to opine that the genius of Delacroix is manifest in the fact that he compels the reader to conceive the scene as he (the artist) imagines it; and adds, "M. Delacroix has surpassed in intensity the pictures I had made in my own mind even." For once Goethe's art-criticism is to the point: Delacroix's most remarkable gift being a power of transposing literary conceptions into a visual medium. On a small scale he did for the ideas of poets and novelists what Shakespeare did for Plutarch and the English chronicles. Only, whereas one transposed literature into good painting, the other converted history into supreme poetry.

Delacroix had the character and temperament of a man of letters, and that remarkable journal of his, published in 1893, is, especially in its later and more elaborate parts, the work of a careful writer rather than of a painter jotting down his fancies and reflections. He was witty, fastidious and cultivated, fond of argument and brilliant in argument, utterly contemptuous of "les gens de métier"—the painters who understood their job and understood nothing else. Incidentally, he was in youth something of a dandy, one of a little band which made it its business to import the latest English fashions. He was profoundly sceptical, noting in his journal (1849) "Je crois . . . qu'on peut affirmer que le progrès doit amener nécessairement, non pas un progrès plus grand encore, mais à la fin négation du progrès, retour au point d'où on est parti." And in his tastes, especially his taste in books—with which in view of his rather stay-at-home habits we may suppose him more extensively acquainted than with pic-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tures even*—he was classical. His admiration for Virgil, Racine and Boileau, for Raphael and the Greeks must have puzzled sorely his romantic followers to whom these names were anathema.

How then did he come to be chief of the romantic school? To answer that question completely one would have to discover what, about the year 1830, was meant by romanticism—matter of itself for an essay. Here we need observe only that, though Delacroix was undisputed chief of the school, he never admitted that he was romantic. To be sure, the chief of a school rarely is of that or any other school. He is himself. Schools are for those who have to be someone else. One groups artists on account of similarities; the more personal and original the more will they tend to escape classification. The qualities which a score of artists have in common are not likely to be the most interesting that they possess; and most of those held in common by the romantics were not only uninteresting but horrid. If Delacroix must be put to school at all it should be with Constable and Géricault in the school of colorists—a school of which the common characteristics were at any rate artistic and honorable. In that school he acquired two excellent habits which differentiate all he did from Davidian productions. He learnt to substitute mass for silhouette; and he learnt to conceive of composition as a balance of movements rather than as something static. This was to fly full in the face of Wincklemann's beau idéal, to break sharply indeed with the frozen calm of the Greeks and Romans.

Delacroix was against the neo-classical school or, at any rate, the school was against Delacroix; by that fact alone he became a romantic, as romanticism was understood in the days of Charles X. "Quiconque," says Huet, "quiconque ne faisait pas des Soldats de Marathon était romantique." Everyone who has read a word of history, who has read the papers for that matter, knows that under a crushing tyranny—and the tyranny of the school was crushing—all shades of dissident opinion—whig, liberal, radical, socialist—tend to merge in a common opposition. After the death of Géricault, Delacroix was the most eminent of opposition painters; by the opposition therefore he was saluted "chief." Was he not abused more violently than anyone else by the officials? How he was abused! "C'était un sauvage, un barbare, un maniaque, un enragé, un fou. . . . Il avait le goût du laid, de l'ignoble, du monstrueux; et puis il ne savait pas dessiner. . . . Il jetait des sceaux de couleur contre la toile, il peignait avec un balai ivre—ce balai ivre parut très joli et fit en son temps un effet énorme." (Gautier: Histoire du Romantisme.) It would seem incredible that the established critics, the bigwigs and high functionaries of the profession, should have used such language of the second painter of their age, had not the same people said the same things about every original artist who appeared during the nineteenth century; had we not heard them with our own ears bellowing comparable nonsense at Renoir, Cézanne, Matisse and Picasso. (See Three Papers on Modernist Art, American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York, 1924.)

Delacroix stood for liberty—members of persecuted oppositions generally do. Even socialists are in favor of free speech until they get into power. Delacroix was consistent and honest. He defended the rights of Courbet, with whose art he had very little sympathy, before the jury of the salon; and Jules Breton tells us how superbly impressive he was when he spoke of individual liberty and the duty of respecting unfamiliar tendencies. We have no news of that sort from Russia, I think. So, though Delacroix may be claimed for the romantic movement on account of his descent from the revolutionary colorists, and on account of his early subjects, often dramatic, not to say violent, and drawn mostly from modern (i. e. non-classical) history and literature, it is above all on account of his passion for artistic independence that he belongs to "the left." It is this firm and passionate belief in individualism which, above anything else, makes him not only a master but a hero of modern painting.

CLIVE BELL.

* Delacroix never visited Italy, Spain or Holland. His expeditions to Morocco and England are classic; he once made a flying visit to Brussels and Antwerp.

The KKK for Boredom

I paid ten dollars for the right
To be a hooded Ku Klux Knight;
I'm sure it must be something grand . . . .
I wonder if I understand.

THE poet of the New York World, at least, is reviving from his Ku Klux Klan scare. If writers for other newspapers and periodicals would let their sense of humor aid their reason in contemplating the works of this order, warnings of the menace it presents might be less current. Instead, we continue to hear that the Invisible Empire is in control of the political machinery of a number of states, and is threatening others.

In the list of those completely under the sway of the dark and sinister force, the name of the State of Oklahoma is seldom lacking. Not only have all the usual charges of whippings, burnings, and intimidations been laid at the door of the Klan there, but it has been guilty—and capable—of the impeachment of a governor. Not only has it impeached a governor, but it has hoodwinked an unsuspecting public into passing a constitutional amendment to allow it to do so. Alas! when the Klan can change the Constitution and remove the public officers of a state at will, slight hope can be entertained for democracy there.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To one brought up in Oklahoma, and well acquainted with politicians, political influences, and political tactics there, such a conclusion is nothing short of ridiculous. If the national strength of the Klan can be judged by the power it wields in Oklahoma, then democracy (so-called) need have no fear, and politicians need worry no longer that this indeterminate element will upset any dope-pots.

The spirit which makes the Ku Klux Klan the popular organization that it is in Oklahoma is not a lust for political power nor a desire for political reform. The Klan is neither a political organization nor a political tool. The recent sensational events in governmental affairs in the state cannot be truly charged to it. Oklahoma's political history has always been colorful, and the same spirit is responsible both for this color and for the Klan—a hangover of the adventuring, gambling, freedom-loving days of '89.

Thirty-five years ago, Oklahoma was a land of Indians, government agents, and cowboys, with a few rum-runners and traders thrown in for fire water's sake. A few years later, "squatters," lured by the Arabian Night tales of the bootleggers and traders, made their appearance. The power of the cattle kings vanished. The urge of those who sought to win fortunes and freedom from legal restraint in this glamorous promised land could not long be denied. The territory was opened for settlement. Cattle ranges were cut up into small farms. Bark villages became towns overnight. In scrambling and struggling, gambling and defrauding, Oklahoma, the white man's land, was born.

Farmers flourished, horse traders likewise; coffee and calico merchants, bankers and real estate sharks, none were disappointed. The state yielded up to its promise. Towns were gay, money was easy, life was worth living. Everybody was taking his chance, and everybody was winning.

Such a heyday could not last long. Coal and oil were discovered. Land became valuable. The struggle was on in earnest. No longer a country of live and let live, but a state of grab and grab and grab, by fair means or foul. Claims, town lots, Indian allotments, and state school lands, were swallowed up in the battle for acres. Eastern capital came in and secured goodly sections while yet the real wealth was unknown. It is rapidly acquiring the rest.

Thirty short years have sufficed to "develop" the state. Where only hope and freedom lived, now poverty and disappointment reign. A land of small businesses and free farmers is transformed into a state of owning interests and dependent laborers. Tenant-farmers, with all their families, work from six in the morning till seven at night, milking the mortgaged cows, tending the mortgaged crops. Coal miners and oil field workers, sons of once independent farmers or merchants, plod through their never-ending toil for an existence wage. Ex-cowboys and ranchmen keep the hardware store or garage books, and regret the dreariness of the new order of things.

The gayety of the '90s has passed, and nothing has come to take its place. Stupid conventionality and dull morality hold their rigorous sway. Dancing and playing pool are regarded as questionable, as are a great many other amusements. Conformity is the rule; it may lead to advancement in the social scale, and dullness is the result. Religion is not an issue. Shrewd merchant-traders, desirous of finding a bolster for a reputation suffering in the matter of honesty, serve on church boards and argue over ways and means of raising a seven-hundred dollar salary for the minister. A handful hear this minister on Sunday mornings, and on Wednesday afternoons the ladies of the church meet with the minister's wife to embroider centrepieces and go over the town gossip. Art literature and music, are "highbrow" subjects indulged in by eccentric unknowns. Culture is fostered for its own sake only in the ladies' Delphian Clubs, through the study of Stoddard's Lectures. The movies! Yes, the movies, the sole relief from nothingness, from days of work with no prospect of anything but work.

One group of settlers alone retained any of the early adventurous spirit and freedom of action in the process of development—the politicians. And they retain it in minor matters only. When small-farming and ranching proved an unprofitable enterprise, a few of the more independent cowboys and claim-owners sought a place of responsibility and an avenue of freedom in politics. During the years that have followed, it is these men who have remained in nominal control of the politics of the state. Mine owners, oil operators, and landlords have been too busy manoeuvering their fortunes to take an active hand in political affairs. They have been content to let these more enthusiastic scions of the early days carry on the actual work, while they merely directed from behind the scenes. So politicians have gambled and scrambled over offices, contracts, and "rake-offs," even as they gambled and scrambled over claims and businesses thirty years ago. And politics have been full of sensation and excitement, even as was all Oklahoma not long since. But the sensations and the sports have been of personalities only, never of principles, for important political decisions are now and have always been made in big business men's offices, not in politicians' chambers.

But as has been said, only a few of the early adventurers and free-lances have been able to get into politics where they have even a limited amount of freedom. The others are chained to the dreariness, monotony, and stupidity of a routine job in a barren village.

Across this scene of dullness and disillusionment flashed, not long since, the fiery cross of the Ku Klux Klan. Mystery, novelty, action, equality—all this the order had to offer. Hale fellows of the early days were the first to leave their columns to don

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the white robes of secrecy. Here might be found excitement comparable to that which they cherished in memory. Disconsolate ministers, discouraged clerks, disappointed lawyers and adventurous mechanics, flocked to the new organization. In it they saw an escape from the all-pervading boredom; a secrecy that gave them a sense of self-importance, a regalia that disguised inequalities and set successful and unsuccessful, rich and poor, owner and laborer, all on one plane. The membership rolls of the Klan grew lengthy. Night rides took place, parades were held, mysterious donations were made, and the K K K was in the public eye.

Crimes were committed by masked men. These were laid at the door of the Klan. Was not this the historical character of the order? The Klan was not punished, hence it must control the courts. This reasoning seemed sound. As a matter of fact, in the majority of cases, Klan members were not punished because they were not responsible for the crimes charged to them. Oftentimes gangs of local loafers, hiding behind the mask of the Klan, perpetrated these offenses. In other cases, the crime was only the whipping of Black Jones, a tenant, by his landlord and others, as a warning to these niggers that they had to work. In days before the Klan became the fashion, this "atrocity" would have been committed in broad daylight and caused no comment whatsoever. Still other crimes laid at the door of the Klan have been rumored to be the acts of public officers themselves, acting on the instigation of financial interests which control them. In these instances, henchmen are punished for "turning a deal" to another concern, or for like acts of personal independence.

Newspaper blazonings of whippings in secluded places, of tarring and featherings, or of anonymous letters, take no note of these other sources of such activity, but reap the glory of adding this atrocity to the record of the Ku Klux Klan. Those who gain their information from newspapers grow fearful of the lawlessness and the power of the Klan. Those who live where the Klan is in action are amused at the press scare stories, and wonder if people actually believe that the Klan is so bad. They know that the members of the Klan are their friends and their neighbors, and that the Klan cannot make them into demons, so are not disturbed. They further know that if the Klan as such were responsible for many crimes, its punishment would not be far off. For courts and legislatures, and the incumbents of judicial and legislative offices, are controlled by one power and one alone, in Oklahoma—money, and not the Klan. It would be a great day, indeed, if a loosely organized body of discontented excitement-seekers could overthrow the entrenched political interests in Oklahoma. The Klan might bring anything but salvation, but at least the new possibility would furnish ground for hope to more deserving constituencies.

LLEWELLYN NELSON.

Washington Notes

THE more this short session of Congress is pondered, the more completely absurd it seems. It is as drab and depressing a spectacle as has been seen in Washington for years. A more listless lot of legislators has not gathered here in a generation. The extreme droopiness of things under the Capitol dome is rapidly reaching the point of a joke among those members whose sense of humor has not been wholly atrophied by the atmosphere. Of course, this melancholy situation is a reflection of the solemn inaction and inanity at the White House. Backed by his seven million plurality, it would seem reasonable to expect the newly elected President to have something in the way of an affirmative idea or desire. If he has any such, he has most successfully concealed it. That his avoidance of anything resembling an administration program for this session, his obvious anxiety to avoid conflict with Congress and his present opposition to an extra session are in accord with the desire of the big business interests so solidly back of him in the last campaign, there is not the least doubt. If an extra session is called it will be because these interests are unwilling to wait until 1926 for their surtax cut—and for no other reason. Except for that they prefer indefinite inaction. That is what they like, and certainly they have picked a President who can give them that. He has an extraordinary talent for it.

The most conspicuous lame duck in Congress is the dashing Medill McCormick, who will very soon be an ex-Senator from Illinois. There is an interesting story to the effect that Senator McCormick, who lost the election by about 1,000 votes, was really defeated by a speech made over the radio by his charming and talented wife the Saturday night before the election. Mrs. McCormick, the story goes, talked on the subject of prohibition and said things that did not go well in the great wet sections of Chicago. In any event, the gallant Medill is about out, and he wants, for a while at least, to succeed Kellogg as Ambassador to Great Britain. It is no secret that Senator McCormick is not particularly popular among his colleagues, nor is there any personal bond of sympathy between him and the President. In fact, there are those who, prior to the Illinois primaries, had discerned a disposition upon the part of Mr. McCormick to patronize Mr. Coolidge slightly. There is no such discernible disposition now. It will be interesting to see whether the Chicago Tribune influence is sufficient to land the appointment. The general feeling is that it is. It is not a bad place for Medill, and Medill is not a bad man for the place. Beside a taste for living abroad, he has the necessary financial equipment, lack of which cut short the Harvey diplomatic career and compelled the Colonel to go to work. Medill is beyond such compulsion.

There isn't the slightest doubt that President Coolidge made the Washington correspondents the "goats" in the Jusserand incident. Not since Mr. Roosevelt was the occupant of the White House has it been done quite so rawly. From Roosevelt, it was the sort of thing the correspondents had come to expect, but from the calm and conscientious Coolidge, it was a real shock—and it still rankles in some of the less hardened journalistic bosoms. What the President did, in effect, was one day to express to the correspondents his extreme displeasure over some of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

M. Jusserand's public remarks, and, on the following day, when it seemed he had made a mistake, to issue a statement repudiating the stories correctly sent out by the correspondents and inspired by himself. Why a group of men of the class and calibre of the Washington correspondents let even a president treat them like that without showing resentment, is one of the mysteries of journalism at the seat of government.

It does seem that some acute politics were played by the administration forces in the matter of the presidential veto of the postal pay increase. Some weeks ago, it looked as if both House and Senate would override. Then the Sterling bill, increasing rates on second class mail matter, was evolved—and at once enormous additional weight in favor of sustaining the veto was brought into play. A situation was created by which it became plain that if the increase in wages is granted, the newspapers and mail-order houses will have to foot the bill. As soon as that fact sank in—and it did not take long—there was a tremendous commotion. Whole regiments of arguments were presented to show the terrific injustice of imposing this burden on the press and the evil effect that would follow. Unquestionably, the mere threat of the Sterling bill strengthened the President's prospects of sustaining his veto. It is an interesting fact that while the fight has been made in the open by the newspapers the mail order fight has been largely under cover. This, however, has not made the mail order opposition any the less effective, and the pressure exerted by it on local senators has been very great. The judgment of those best posted is that the Sterling bill is marked for oblivion at this session, and that, regardless of the commitments of senators and House members, it is not possible to override the veto in both houses. The postal employes are out of luck. They may fare better next year, but at this session little short of a legislative upset will give them a look in. That is possible but not probable. They have been outplayed.

The assault of the New York Herald-Tribune upon the intrepid Colonel Harvey for daring to intimate that the gallant and glorious French have no real intention of paying their war debts is just about as interesting and important as that clawing and kicking match some days ago between Senator Harrison and Senator Bruce over which was the better Democrat. It does, however, revive memory of the extreme sensitiveness of those two noble New York publishers, Mr. Reid and Mr. Munsey, on the general subject of the French. Let there be so much as a hint that as a nation or as individuals they do not embody and typify all the virtues, and those two gentlemen who were decorated by the French Government after the war for their services on this side, at once fly to arms.

In this particular instance the Herald-Tribune editorial writer closes his denunciation of Colonel Harvey by referring to him as a "muddle-headed editor." Even this violent description by the admitted authority on muddle-headed editors, however, has not crushed the Colonel. Along with a good many others, he continues to believe that the day we get a real dollar, even in interest, from the French, will be an exceedingly cold and distant one—notwithstanding protestations of their desire and purpose to pay, and regardless of the "kind but firm" pronouncements of such Mellon spokesmen as Senator Reed of Pennsylvania. Loucheur was right.

It does look as if Hearst had frightened the President away from the Underwood Muscle Shoals bill. At least, that is the modest intimation one gathers from the Hearst papers.

Certainly, Mr. Coolidge was for the Underwood bill three weeks ago, and word to that effect went out to the administration leaders. Just as certainly, he has withdrawn that support now. The only apparent reason is because it looked like too stiff a fight and he has no stomach for a fight at this session. One distinct misapprehension about the Underwood bill is generally held—that the farming interests which were so ardently back of the Ford offer are against the Underwood measure. That is pure propaganda. The farm organizations are behind the Underwood bill and may save it, in spite of the cooling of Coolidge. It is not, however, likely. The prospects now are there will be no Muscle Shoals legislation this session. With it and the Sterling bill both on the rocks, literally nothing but the routine appropriation bills will get through this time. It will be the most sterile session on record.

T. R. B.

Washington.

A COMMUNICATION

The Child Labor Amendment

SIR: The December 3d issue of the New Republic contains an article on the Child Labor Amendment to the federal Constitution which in my judgment overlooks the most serious objection to the amendment existing in the minds of many citizens of liberal social outlook. It is true that the propaganda of the organized opposition to the amendment is of an indefensible and superficial character, but it is disappointing to find one of your editorials which purports to summarize the situation following suit.

The real question regarding the child labor amendment is the same as that upon which judgment as to the wisdom of the Eighteenth Amendment depends. This question is primarily one of enforcement. It is a question of the limits of effective legal action in the face of groups of hostile population. After the thorough discussion with which your contributors on topics of legal and social jurisprudence have favored the readers of the New Republic in the case of the Prohibition and Civil War Amendments so far as the latter affects the civil rights of negroes, it is rather suprising to find this aspect of the problem of the Child Labor Amendment omitted from your current discussion.

The present writer favors an age limit prohibiting child labor as high or higher than that today imbedded in any state statute. Nevertheless he is not persuaded that the best way to secure the adoption of a high standard in all states is by the short cut of a constitutional amendment. The labor of educating opinion in the southern states to an acceptance of a social standard deemed even a suitable minimum by prevailing opinion in the northern states may be a long, arduous, and expensive task. One fully appreciates the desire of all social reformers to attain quick results. But putting a law into the Constitution and supporting it by congressional enactment is not the same thing as achieving the final result in practice. The longer way around of local persuasion and education may in the end prove to be shortest way across, as well as avoiding unanticipated complications and by-products in the way of governmental corruption and disrespect for law.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If the dominant political sentiment in large areas is hostile to a new policy, federal hortatory legislation is not likely to effect a change. On the contrary, matters may be made actually worse. For outside forces, having attained the enactment of a law, are likely to lessen their educational propaganda. Local pride and indignation are likely to be stimulated to increased resistance against governmental coercion and alleged invasion of personal liberty. This is already evident in the case of the Child Labor Amendment by the newly aroused propaganda against invasion of the home and of the rights of parents over their children. This all might be summarily dismissed if it were restricted solely to the northern states, but the situation is more serious when entire states express their opposition by failure to enact legislation and by hastening to vote adversely on the submitted amendment. If the federal law is finally enacted, local enforcement officers in these states will, as in the case of prohibition and the enfranchisement of the negro, continue to be dependent upon local political influence for their appointment with resulting nullification of the law.

It is of course true that the Child Labor Amendment now before the country is entirely permissive so far as federal legislation is concerned. To this extent it is superior to the Prohibition Amendment. But the proponents of the new amendment frankly state that its enactment will be followed not only by legislation prohibiting the shipment in interstate commerce of the products of child labor but that its passage will be further construed as a popular mandate for an enactment against the use of child labor in the manufacture of products to be consumed entirely within a state. This fact may well cause some cooling of enthusiasm on the part of those who would otherwise fully sympathize with a gateway amendment to the Constitution which would take control of an important sphere of social legislation from the Supreme Court and place it with Congress.

This I believe to be the strongest argument that can be made for the present form of the amendment, namely, that the powers of the Supreme Court over social legislation would be diminished in favor of the supremacy of Congress. It then becomes possible for an individual to support the Child Labor Amendment without favoring subsequent hortatory legislation in the face of hostile local sentiment. This is a conclusion which any individual who would avoid the wrath of the "liberal hundred percenters" must earnestly desire to arrive at. And by taking this position now one lessens the force of the argument which will be subsequently made that the amendment is a mandate for legislation going beyond the regulation by federal power of the interstate shipment of the products of child labor. Whether ultimately it will be desirable to enact federal legislation controlling child labor engaged on products consumed entirely within the state of manufacture will depend upon the growth of popular sentiment within such state or states, and upon practical experience as to the feasibility of interstate restrictions without control at the source. As in the case of international opium regulation, control at the source may be the only means of effective control of any sort; legislation based on a distinction between goods designed for domestic and for interstate shipment *may* be impracticable in practice.

These are properly considerations for Congress and not for the Supreme Court. But the entire question of states' rights versus federal encroachment is at bottom determinable by similar practical considerations in any given case. And if in any field the supremacy of the Supreme Court over Congress remains unimpaired it is in the field of the separation of powers between state and federal government. Talk about the fundamental and inherent rights of childhood or of the inalienable right of the nation to a sturdy manpower mean little in this controversy in the face of the utter failure of opinion in many important political subdivisions of the nation to comprehend the nature of these natural rights. As in the case of prohibition, one may personally sympathize with the effort to raise an issue to the higher plane of morals or religion, but until the standard is generally accepted in principle, the problem remains in the sphere of politics. Talk of inherent and natural rights sounds doubly strange in the mouths of those whom one had supposed were the high priests of the newer sociological jurisprudence.

It is of course equally strange to find a President of the United States who was elected as much as anything on the issue of the supremacy of the Supreme Court favoring the present form of the Child Labor Amendment. But that was before the overwhelming termination of the election, and already in this quarter a trimming of the sails to catch new political breezes is apparent. Inasmuch as the present writer is opposed to the supremacy of the Supreme Court over Congress in all spheres, he is not inclined to quibble over the issue whether it would not be franker to face that larger issue directly rather than under cover of sentiment for childhood. He is quite willing to take what he can get in the way of even this piece-meal relaxation of the grip of the Supreme Court on the political and economic development of the nation. But for the sake of his own intellectual honesty and the record in the case, which may not be without future significance when the question of congressional action arises, he wishes to dissent from the analysis of those with whose general point of view and specific conclusions he is usually happy to find himself in accord.

ARTHUR FISHER.

Chicago, Illinois.

CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Spingarn's Position

SIR: This is not an answer to Dr. H. M. Kallen's lengthy review of Criticism in America in one of your recent issues, which I have just seen and read with relish. It is not an argument for the things in which I believe. It is a protest and a blast of defiance against all the writers who have done me the honor to discuss my work without doing me the honor to read what I have written. A few of your readers will, I think, be interested to know what I do *not* believe, if for no other reason than that these things are exactly what some of my critics (including Dr. Kallen) have supposed me to stand for:

1. I am *not* an advocate of "aestheticism," in criticism or anything else. I have tried to make it clear that I regard "aestheticism" as an even graver critical vice than "moralism."

2. I am *not* an advocate of "impressionism." I have tried to make it clear that I regard impressionism as no less inadequate than the dogmatism traditionally opposed to it.

3. I do *not* believe that criticism is "expression" in the sense in which art is expression, or that the critic who merely expresses himself serves the true function of criticism. Mr. Mencken may or may not have deduced this from my books, but the very reverse is explicitly stated by me. In one of my essays I have elaborated the arguments of an imaginary impressionist who holds such views, but only to confute him.

4. Naturally, therefore, I do *not* believe that criticism is an art in the sense in which poetry or painting is an art. On the few occasions on which I have referred to the "art of criticism," it is apparent, I think, that I am emphasizing a side of criticism in which its kinship with art is most direct and real, that first stage of the critical process in which the critic attempts through his imagination to recapture the creative vision of the artist.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

5. I do *not* believe that great writers are or need be without profound convictions. In a letter read not long ago on a public occasion, I put it thus: "I know some people think that an artist is a man who has nothing to say and who writes in order to prove it; but not in this way have the great writers conceived of their art."

6. Finally, I do *not* deny that everything man does is subject to a moral judgment; I merely doubt the relevance of such a judgment at a given "moment" of the spirit. Every act of man may also be subjected to an aesthetic judgment (is it or is it not beautiful?), but there are moments of the spirit when it is irrelevant and impertinent. When a modern French writer conceives of Napoleon as essentially a great lyrical artist—that seems to me an irrelevance. And when one of the older writers of New England, John Quincy Adams, says he reads Shakespeare "only as a moral teacher" and conceives it to be the purpose of Othello to prove that it is a crime for a white woman to marry a negro —that also seems to me an irrelevance!

J. E. SPINGARN.

Amenia, N. Y.

Ethics of Capitalism

SIR: Mr. Schwenning's review of Judson Rosebush's Ethics of Capitalism would have been more convincing had he not committed the unpardonable sin of imputing motives to the author. The introduction to Mr. Rosebush's book is a "personal word" in which he frankly reveals the stake he has in the present capitalistic system that his ethical judgments may be evaluated with full knowledge of the natural bias of his interests. It is not the act of a gentleman to deny this, Mr. Rosebush's avowed purpose, by claiming that his statement of business activities is "to impress his readers duly with the fact that he is a man of parts." It is undoubtedly true that Mr. Rosebush is very conservative in his economic theory, but as I read his book I get a different notion of his spirit than that imputed to him by his reviewers. How can we expect to make progress towards mutual understanding and agreement as to what is truth in this controverted field if our critical interpreters are unfair?

Another charge against Mr. Schwenning. He deplores the fact that the book is published by the Y. M. C. A. Press, as thereby its influence on them is increased; in particular that that Y Secretaries will be perverted and that organization "will become more reactionary in its industrial program than ever." It is an interesting fact that a book that vigorously champions certain of the economic reforms most anathema to Mr. Rosebush, a book that he names at least twice (pages 41, 161) in protesting against these ideas, is published also by the Y.M.C.A. Press. I wonder how many liberals and radicals are familiar with The Church and Industrial Reconstruction, and whether they regard an organization that makes free use of this sweeping protest against the wrongs of our present social order in its discussion groups as being altogether reactionary and controlled by privilege. Evidently the Y. M. C. A. Press believes in being fair and printing things worth while on both sides of the problem. It is only as that spirit prevails that a solution can be found.

HALE SUTHERLAND.

Belmont, Mass.

A Morel Memorial Fund

SIR: It is hoped to raise a fund in memory of E. D. Morel, his work for the liberation of the Congo and for International Understanding.

E. D. Morel gave the best years of a remarkably active and beneficent life in the service of humanity. He consistently put in the second place not only his own interests, but even the interests of those dependent upon him. His emoluments had been for many years very much below what he would have been able to command had he chosen to work for money. He knew that his life was very insecure and he must have had faith that his family would not be allowed to suffer because of his disinterestedness. We would like the fund to reach dimensions which would ensure this.

It is proposed to hand over to his family any sum raised, deducting only enough for a memorial tablet in the cloisters of the "Garden of Peace" at Golders Green.

Subscriptions should be sent to the Secretary, E. D. Morel Memorial Fund, Orchard House, Great Smith Street, S. W. I.

H. Baillie-Weaver, Raymond Beazley, E. N. Bennett, E. W. Birmingham, Margaret G. Bondfield, H. N. Brailsford, Fred. Bramley, Charles Roden Buxton, Noel Buxton, J. R. Clynes, Kate Courtney of Penwith, C. Birch Crisp, Hamilton Fyfe, G. P. Gooch, Charles Gore, Arthur Henderson, J. A. Hobson, Thomas Johnston, J. M. Kenworthy, George Lansbury, A. Susan Lawrence, H. B. Lees-Smith, J. Ramsay MacDonald, Hector Macpherson, P. A. Molteno, Oswald Mosley, Henry W. Nevinson, Marion Phillips, Arthur Ponsonby, A. Maude Royden, Bertrand Russell, G. Bernard Shaw, F. J. Shaw, Robert Smillie, Herbert Smith, Philip Snowden, D. M. Stevenson, Sophia Sturge, H. M. Swanwick, E. S. Talbot, Charles Trevelyan, Robert C. Trevelyan and Israel Zangwill.

London.

Goose-Step and Golden Eggs

SIR: The implication in your article in your December 24th issue, The Goose-step and the Golden Eggs, that Mr. Eastman has only supported "institutions that are well established and flourishing" scarcely corresponds with reality. In fact his contributions practically meet your desire that millionaires support only new and worthy ventures that would otherwise fail.

His gifts to education have always been to those departments that most needed help; for instance, gifts to the Mechanics Institute in Rochester, the Department of Physics at the Rochester University and for technical education at the Massachusetts Institute. Rochester University could scarcely have been described as a "flourishing" institution; nor could Massachusetts Institute of Technology until Mr. Eastman had contributed large sums to it. His endowment of the School of Music and Motion Picture Theatre in Rochester is surely both necessary and novel, since it not only encourages musical appreciation by the motion picture public who have not hitherto had symphony music here. Then the establishment of a Dental Dispensary where all the children of the city whose parents' income is below a certain amount can have free dental and nose and throat service, and the establishment of a big Medical School in conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation cannot be described as supporting things which would have flourished without help, for, unaided, they would possibly never have come into existence. You surely do not suggest also that the donations towards negro education (to which Mr. Eastman has contributed for many years past) were not required and are not exemplary to other rich people?

The addition of the big Medical School of the University put other citizens of Rochester on their mettle, and they recently had a drive for the College of Arts when they secured pledges for $7,500,000. This was entirely independent of Mr. Eastman, but he is said to have been influenced by this success in making his last large gift, a large part of which is specifically allocated to the Music School.

As to wanting the Kodak Company to be controlled by university trustees, the idea could only occur to some one entirely unacquainted with Mr. Eastman's opinions, for short of government control nothing I imagine could be more repugnant to him. Moreover, the shares donated are to be sold; since writing your article you have probably noticed that, in fact, a large portion of them has already been sold.

I cannot help thinking that you are less likely to encourage that "rare bird the experimental millionaire" when you misunderstand and deprecate a current which, while not going so far as you might like, is at all events in the right direction, and a notable record for others to equal or surpass.

A. J. NEWTON.

Rochester, N. Y.

[We are grateful to Mr. Newton for the service he has performed for the readers of the New Republic by presenting a more detailed picture of Mr. Eastman's benefactions than we were able to do. That picture adds greatly to the clarity of the distinction which we have tried to make between established educational forms and innovations. When we spoke of the schools endowed by Mr. Duke and Mr. Eastman as "well established and flourishing," we had in mind, of course, Trinity College and the Rochester University. Relatively speaking the designation appears to be accurate. What we described as beyond the pale of this munificence was "sports, the new, the unusual, the experimental." Mr. Newton's presumption that the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the schools of medicine and music, the institutes for negro education come under this designation is indeed an interesting commentary.—THE EDITORS.]

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American Documents

Memoirs of the Notorious Stephen Burroughs. New York: Lincoln MacVeagh. The Dial Press. $4.00.

The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell. New York: Lincoln MacVeagh, The Dial Press. $5.00.

IN his preface to the Memoirs of Stephen Burroughs, Mr. Robert Frost, to whom their republication is due, places his discovery on the shelf beside Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Edwards, to reassure us in regard to the human nature of our ancestors, to prove that there was enough wickedness among them to salt their young society. Undoubtedly it was as an antidote to virtue that the Memoirs enjoyed their early popularity, which testifies to the insatiable appetite for rogue stories even in New England. The present edition follows the text published at Albany in 1811; and includes a preface from an Amherst edition of 1858. To maintain the reputation of the book for nearly a half century many other editions must have intervened. We can readily imagine that to New England in its decaying Puritanism the book offered a moral release as emphatic as The Pirates' Own Book.

Stephen Burroughs was born about 1765, the son of a clergyman of distinction in Hanover, New Hampshire, against whose Presbyterian principles he reacted with the full measure of his "volatile, impatient habit of mind." His early exploits were of the sort familiar in picaresque stories, practical jokes with a flavor of cruelty. Like Bunyan's Mr. Badman he progressed from theft to Sabbath breaking. His first enemies were the schoolmasters, and it was a sign of his triumph over the disciplinary resources of preparatory school and Dartmouth College that at the age of seventeen he left his father's house to begin his wanderings. After several false starts and recoils he fell into an adventure the fame of which spread over New England and gave him the first claim to his description as the notorious Stephen Burroughs. On leaving home he had taken with him a number of his father's sermons, and thus provided he assumed the style of clergyman and was engaged to preach for four Sundays at the town of Pelham, Mass. Before the last of these, however, his imposture was discovered, and he was chased out of town by the indignant parishioners. In Pelham he had made friends of some persons engaged in counterfeiting, and on attempting to distribute the product of their industry at Springfield, Mass., he was arrested, tried, found guilty and sentenced to three years imprisonment, this in 1785.

As a prisoner Burroughs fixed his mind on the idea of escape, and devoted himself to its realization with unconquerable ingenuity and persistence. At first confined in Northampton Jail he repeatedly attacked the walls in attempts to dig himself out. Transferred for greater security to the Castle in Boston Harbor, he was the leader of a jail delivery which included the capture of one of the guards, the seizure of a boat, a dangerous passage to the mainland, and a flight through Dorchester until the convicts were overtaken in a barn where they had sought rest. After another and even more desperate attempt to overpower the military force on the island, in which Burroughs's companions deserted him at the moment of attack, he gave up and served out his sentence in sullen submission.

On the expiration of his sentence Burroughs turned from preaching to teaching as his basic occupation. He was engaged as master of a small school at Charleton, Massachusetts, and there married his cousin Sallie Davis, by whom he had three children. He confesses to the seduction of one of his pupils, a crime which was exaggerated into three charges of assault with intent to commit rape. Once more tried and found guilty he was sentenced to receive one hundred seventeen stripes on the naked back, to stand two hours in the pillory, to sit one hour on the gallows, and to be confined in prison for three months.

He received part of the corporal punishment and while awaiting the remainder he was released from jail by what he describes as a forcible intervention of the community on his behalf, and after an agonizing flight across Connecticut he finally reached Long Island. Again employed as teacher, he quarrelled with the principal men of the village including the clergyman; and after further legal battles he beat his way to Georgia, where he resumed teaching, drifted into speculation in land and became the agent of Robert Morris, the financier of the colonies in the Revolution. He subsequently returned to Hanover, and after his father's death removed to Canada, where he wrote the account of his tumultuous life.

Crime in every environment takes its color from the morality of which it is the antitype. Thus the exploits of Stephen Burroughs reflect the ideals of religious and civic virtue which prevailed in New England at the close of the American Revolution. It was the exceptional position enjoyed by the clergy which led Burroughs to choose preaching as the line of least resistance for his wits, and his encroachment upon sacred prerogatives remained as the greatest of his offences in the sight of his fellow men. Again in the years of revolution, when the limits and seat of the authority of the state were uncertain, private coinage seemed to be a legal but not a moral breach—somewhat like bootlegging today. In view of the current revolutionary enthusiasm for liberty it is not surprising to find Burroughs claiming its principles as applicable to himself. "How is this, said I to myself, that a country which has stood the foremost in asserting the cause of liberty, that those who have tasted the bitter cup of slavery and have known from hence the value of liberty, should so soon after obtaining that blessing themselves, deprive others of it?" In regard to sexual morality Burroughs maintains the pudicity of a New Englander. Of the single occasion on which he acknowledges himself at fault he writes with delicacy: "A number of circumstances happening to throw a certain enjoyment full in my view, the temptation was too powerful. I fell before it. The fatal moment was past. It could not be recalled." Thus we have in Burroughs a type true to his period and country, a Puritan picaro, with little in his composition to justify comparison with Cellini, Cagliostro, Casanova, and other rogues made in Italy.

It is as a document of eighteenth century New England that the Memoirs of Stephen Burroughs deserve publication, a fine example of colonial variation from the parent stock. Burroughs begins his narrative in the dry matter-of-fact manner of Smollett. His accounts of youthful practical jokes read like the early exploits of Roderick Random and Peregrine Pickle. But Burroughs was susceptible to another literary influence of the eighteenth century which succeeded in point of time the hard realism of Smollett. His quarrel with the clergyman at Bridghampton occurred over the selection of books for a public library for which Burroughs had collected funds. One of the books which he wished to include was Henry Brooke's novel, The Fool of Quality; and it is clear that the ideals of virtue and feeling

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which Brooke exemplified with such eloquence and emotion were those of Burroughs himself. Burroughs wrote his Memoirs for a friend who had formed an impression of his character as including "an uncommon share of sensibility" and "an equality of mind which is uncommon, particularly in the midst of those occurrences which are calculated to wound the feelings." It is clear that this is the pose which Burroughs assumed, and which he sought to maintain throughout his self-revelations. On the one hand he is never weary of asserting that in his character as loving son, husband and father, and at the same time as criminal, prisoner and outcast, he suffers a variety of mental torture beyond his reader's experience. On the other hand, he is equally voluble in maintaining the dignity of mind which rises superior to all physical misfortunes. Classic examples of fortitude are reënforced by philosophical observations in the eighteenth century manner. "No state or condition in life, but from which we may (if we exercise that reason which the God of Nature has given us) draw comfort and happiness." Truth to period is enforced by the quotations, in chapter headings and elsewhere, of eighteenth century moral poetry, chiefly from Young's Night Thoughts.

The Journal of Nicholas Cresswell is the notebook of a young English farmer who left his home in Derbyshire in 1774 to examine the prospects for successful settlement in the Colonies. He landed in Virginia, and traveled westward by way of Fort Pitt and the Ohio river as far as Illinois, and north to New York. Cresswell writes laconically, with nothing of the color of adventure or amplitude of discourse which distinguishes Burroughs. His literal jottings carry their own comment. For instance, take this for therapy: "Drank a quart of sea water which operated both ways very plentifully and did me great service"; or this for æsthetics: "The State of the Earl of Chatham is still standing unhurt in the attitude of an apple woman, dressed like a Roman Orator. I am not a judge, but don't think it clever": or this for wordly wisdom: "Mem. Never to have anything to do with my Relations. I know their dispositions only too well."

Cresswell offers corroborative testimony to the manners and morals of the colonials outside of New England. "Have been genteely treated, and am now going to bed drunk" is a note frequently repeated, always followed by a punctilious record of after effects. Cresswell's journey coincided with the years of political disturbance which we like to call the American Revolution, and of which he took an unfavorably realistic view. "The people in this Colony and the province of Maryland are in general greatly in debt to the Merchants in England, and think a revolt would pay all." As an ardent royalist he had trouble with the local authorities. According to his account the pre-war state of mind in February, 1775, was parallel to that of 1917: "The Committee act as Justices. If any person is found to be inimical to the liberties of America, they give them over to the Mobility to punish as they think proper, and it is seldom they come off without tarring and feathering. It is as much as a person's life is worth to speak disrespectfully of the Congress. The people are arming and training in every place. They are all liberty mad."

These documents out of the past, recovered by the happy enterprise of Mr. MacVeagh and made into beautiful books by the Dial Press, are among the notable features of the present publishing season, and deserve the attention of those who gather books of distinction.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT.

Idealism on Demand

Things and Ideals; Essays in Functional Philosophy, by M. C. Otto. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $2.50.

THE function of philosophy is to define the function of philosophy. This is, indeed, its hardest task. Other disciplines deal with learning, which is only recollection, and research, which is only intellectual hide and seek, whereas philosophy deals in understanding. And it requires philosophy to know what understanding is. One thing is certain: it is not an emotional attitude. No amount of warmth of feeling for higher things will serve for wisdom about their meaning. This is the tragedy of the understanding. Many are called and all are chosen, yet it were easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for any mortal man to resolve the confusions of his own heart. A prophet never lacks for followers. When Jesus appeared, says Professor Otto, men and women tramped for days together in growing crowds over hot, dusty roads to see him, to hear him, and if possible, in ecstacy to touch him.

> There was something so engaging yet noble in his bearing, something so simple yet profound in his thought, something so poetic yet vital in his speech, something so sad yet healing in his smile that, presently, turning to one another, they whispered, "Never man spake like this man." Which is by no means to say that they understood him.

The external universe and the human soul itself seem to be in conspiracy to rob man of understanding. These very feelings by which men are drawn out of themselves seem to divest them of their wits. No sooner had Christ announced a new era, based upon the principle of human equality, to continue the quotation, than men "forthwith fell to wondering and then to disputing which of them should have the chief advantage from the revolution." Or take such a soul-blasting experience as the recent war. Men are profoundly moved. Their ancient faiths are shattered. Their conventional acquiescence in an omnipotent Creator of a most perfect universe is melted away by the fires of the human inferno. But what, then, do they arrive at? Upon the evidence of the literature of war theology they create only limited monarchies presided over by Invisible Kings after the fashion of George V, or "cosmic bell-boys" whose function it is to run errands for The Good, self-effacingly, as becomes the Indefinable. Understanding, is not, apparently, bought at the price of an international jag.

Upon the presumption that all men think together for good, the tremendous extension of scientific knowledge through the course of the last few centuries should have led to greater understanding. Perhaps, indeed, it has. Yet that result is not automatic. The scientists themselves, who should manifest such changes as might be expected to accrue immediately from the "penetration of the secrets of nature," are, on the contrary, an idle and a perverse generation. The sharpening of their senses in one direction seems only to dull their vision in another. Either they close their eyes obstinately against all the facts of the distinctively human universe, or they squint at it through a blear or prejudice all the more naïve for being unsuspected in a scientist. Of the two, the mechanist is certainly the better fellow. At least he stays in his laboratory. Whatever arrogance he exhibits is confined to his own household. Elec-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

trons explain atoms; atoms explain molecules; molecules explain cells; cells explain tissue; tissue explains function; function explains behavior. It is all true enough. If it fails to illuminate the character of the old lady who wished to get home that night, the failure is a clean one of omission. She has not been mentioned.

When, however, scientists come down from their scientific Sinais with tablets of stone bearing inscriptions for the direction of human life, and these the revelations of those who have seen the Lord Himself pass by, they are not only not a great help to understanding; they are a very disagreeable obstacle indeed. Unfortunately this has been the growing habit of scientists of late. A pope exercises but a puny and vascillating omniscience compared with that of the periodic crop of Nobel prize-winners. As Professor Otto notes:

> Men of science, have won deserved recognition for perservering dedication to the search for objective truth, and they must be credited with having devised the most accurate methods of investigation as yet achieved by men; yet in the present-day movement to re-define the higher life their influence must be counted on the side of emotionalism and obscurantism. There are scientists of whom this cannot truthfully be said, but the great majority of those who have attempted to exert an influence have taken this uncompromising position: they have stood unswervingly for the elimination of every form of obscurantism from science, while they have not only been willing to retain, but have insisted upon retaining obscurantism and subjectivism in the moral and religious fields. Perhaps this has seemed necessary to them in order to "sell" science to the public. If so, the bargain may turn out to have cost a pretty price.

By science we gain the whole world and lose our own souls. The scientist forgets the soul, or he remembers it, reminiscing in archaic mood.

The philosopher, of course, would neither remember nor forget. He would, simply, think. The deepest insights of the present day, as of every season in the philosophical calendar, are the simplest. Whatever neglect they may suffer at the hands of physicists and anatomists, the truths of the spirit are still the bread upon which we chiefly live. Neither is it an imaginary bread, sublimated away into a shadowy universe of Perfect Being, or Absolute Personality. The difficulties which beset the understanding are the same in this age as in any other. The highest truths and the dearest causes appear to our imaginations in the picturesque metaphor that always ekes out understanding, and the metaphors are not strictly true. What, then, shall we believe? That these realities were an illusion? That they can be conserved only by still more soaring metaphors, still wilder stretches of the imagination which shall place them beyond the reach of critical intelligence? That is our temptation. Yet we know that what we treasure in our ideals is their actuality. They are at work. Understanding is not won by fleeing from this world, nor by cynically forswearing all ideals. We crave, always, a deus ex machina, a perfect metaphor, potent in the affairs of life, which none the less intelligence can never sully. But what we crave does not necessarily exist. What does exist is both actual and suffused with human interest and human idealism. This is what understanding seeks to grasp.

Professor Otto, whose first book is here presented to a general public, is certainly one of the clearest philosophic minds now living in America. In Things and Ideals he has not sought to be original. It is not the business of philosophy to be original. The immanent idealism of which he writes is the philosophy of John Dewey and William James, of Kant and Hume, and, I think, of the great Greeks. That is, it is no special dogma, but rather a clear-eyed realization of the togetherness of all things not in Heaven or Hell nor in an intellectual Elysium of absolute reality but in their most ordinary guises of annoying and illuminating actuality. In short, he is one of "those who do insist that the ideal and the real are dynamically continuous," and therefore, if this dictum of James's, quoted on the fly-leaf of the book, be true, one of those "by whom the world is to be saved."

C. E. AYRES.

Points of View

Points of View, by Stuart P. Sherman. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.00.

IF this latest collection of Mr. Sherman's essays and discussions does not quite reach the unity achieved by some of his preceding volumes, his general fabric still offers a few familiar guiding strands. The younger generation is again present, whether in the shape of the western college student or of the eastern literary Mohawk; and that servicable antagonist, Henry L. Mencken, submits his proud chest for a frequent blow, direct or indirect. Above and beyond all these considerations one perceives, of course, an earnest, persisting endeavor to moralize life and to establish some firm basic rule for its conduct in this our America.

In the immediate future the sophomore will engage Mr. Sherman's attention rather less, and the Mohawk rather more: a new environment determines that. Even more clearly than before will our author view the advanced young writers of the East as a pack of Hallowe'en hoodlums, with their eyes too firmly fixed on the present fleeting moment, and with scant outfit as regards chronology and perspective. Besides being rather bumptious and disorderly, they tend to be rather foolish and funny. Just how foolish and funny, it will take them twenty years or so to find out—at the time when they begin to pass along these epithets (unless manners mend) to the succeeding generation of self-expressers.

As for Mr. Mencken, now so much nearer at hand—he is too fruitful an adversary to be dispensed with. The controversy will wax—and may even end in an accord. For the two men are not so unlike as they suppose. If the essence of practical Puritanism resides in such an excess of moral energy, originally applied to the control of one's own conduct, as shall provide a considerable surplus for positive application to others, the two are not a world apart. Mr. Mencken is as much concerned over his Methodists and Rotarians as Mr. Sherman is concerned over his undergraduates and his gamins of the literary highway. The one, no less than the other, can give liberally from his store, in the hope of truths that may bring the patient rather nearer the individual heart's desire.

Mr. Sherman shows in more places than one his firm belief that the personality of a nation and its advantageous direction depend alike upon its writers: a pleasant notion, this, but perhaps of higher validity in a country like France, which is highly socialized and highly regardful of the arts,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than among the English-speaking people, with whom the arts are secondary, and the artist himself a "sport," or even a predestined victim, rather than a representative of his race. Yet our people, after all, read immensely, and are doubtless influenced beyond their own consciousness of influence; and Mr. Sherman goes so far, in his consideration of censorship, as to suggest that the critic may replace the censor. We do move and have our being in an endless atmosphere of spirit, and "to modify the controllable part of environment in the interest of public welfare" is work at once for criticism and statecraft. Possibly another means might be suggested: make the people so morally robust that they will be able to withstand the inroads of the nastier and more insidious of the artistic germs. A few Fieldings might aid here—if they were not drowned in outcry before their sanative powers came to be recognized.

Mr. Sherman ends his volume with papers on Samuel Butler, Disraeli, and George Sand in correspondence with Flaubert—matters not bearing on the immediate American scene, but dowered with a burning quality, all the same. It is worth while to be reminded that a "burry" old bachelor turns his back on the pieties and amenities with loss rather than with gain; that even a tawdry-seeming climber may entertain his own private ironical view of the society through which he ascends; and that between the Sandesque disposition to love all and the Flaubertian trend to loathe all there exists a wide field for reasonable living and for compromise between the extreme claims of an ecstatic optimist and of a dour pessimist. And imbedded in the middle of the volume is the well-written pamphlet on the greatness of Sinclair Lewis. It reads as well as ever.

HENRY B. FULLER.

Capital Punishment

Man's Judgment of Death, by Lewis E. Lawes. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.00.

THIS little book by Lewis E. Lawes, Warden of Sing Sing Prison, is important for two reasons. In the first place, being an attempt to determine the value of the death penalty as a deterrent of crime, it has the merit of timeliness. We mean of course, that it follows close upon the Leopold-Loeb case, which probably made more people pause to consider what they thought about capital punishment than ever thought about it before. The theories which form the basis of penal law may be summed up as retribution, reformation, deterrence and prevention. The first of these is of theological origin and has long since been discarded in law. And yet a majority of those who ardently wished to see the Leopold and Loeb boys hanged, were thinking of what they deserved, and not of how future murders of the same kind could be prevented.

Of the remaining theories one, deterrence, is the preoccupation of this book. The author believes that public sentiment against capital punishment, always a factor in the gradual lessening of the domain of its applicability, is at the present time strong enough to warrant believing that it will eventually be swept away. In the slow evolution of opinion regarding it, among the arguments and appeals which have been made in behalf of abolition, one very important approach has been overlooked. No attempt has thus far been made to find out whether capital punishment, from the point of view of a deterrent, really works. No one, apparently, has ever tried to find out whether there exists a body of evidence which might make possible a scientific answer. This lack explains why, in the second place, Mr. Lawes's book is so important. It is an attempt to deal statistically with a problem which has heretofore known only assumption or generalization based on sentiment.

The method cannot be too warmly praised. The greater is the pity therefore that it should be applied by one who understands it so little. Mr Lawes has a single criterion. He has collected from the various states of the United States statistics relating to the number of homicides and the number of death sentences and executions, and has sought to show that where the death penalty has been abolished the homicide rate is lower than where it is retained. But when he compares Minnesota and Michigan, two "abolition" states, with Ohio and Indiana, two states retaining capital punishment which are "similar in general character and geographical location," and finds the homicide rate in the last two noticeably larger than in the first two, *is* that an end to the matter? We cannot but doubt it. And when we find Mr. Lawes saying, on page 44, that the large number of Italians given death sentences in New York State since 1889 is "especially significant in view of the very low homicide rate in Italy where capital punishment has been abolished for more than thirty years" our doubts as to Mr. Lawes's statistical equipment deepen. Is no account to be taken of the enormous factor of transplantation to an alien country, and the many complexities which such an adjustment involves? In this instance at least Mr. Lawes seems to us to be satisfied too easily with a correlation which is coincidental rather than causal.

The instance cited is an arrow pointing to what is wrong with the book. The statistical method is essentially an analytical method and there has been no preliminary analysis to serve as a skeleton for the figures. Yet there is ample evidence that the author knows at least some of the elements of his problem. Time and again throughout the book he turns up the most exciting clues, apparently without knowing it, and then rushes off again in his chosen direction. For example, one would expect somewhere in the book, preferably in the beginning, an attempt to classify criminals in order better to classify punishments. Has Mr. Lawes attempted a classification? No. However, on page 48 he says:

> Murderers may be divided roughly into two groups. First, the usually normal, dependable type, who in a moment of great mental stress commit the crime and who are, except for that one moment of their lives, normal individuals. Second, the abnormal type, including those really insane, the border line cases, the defectives and moral delinquents and those with low mental development. Many of these latter have a mentality as low as that of a six-year old child.

But on page 53, he speaks of a new class—the "born killer" type. What in the name of science is that, and where are we now?

Again, after a discussion of the large number of convictions for indictable offenses in Canada and England as contrasted with the United States where the proportion of convictions to offenses is relatively small, Mr Lawes sums up in the following admirable manner:

> My own opinion, which is borne out by statistics, is that the comparatively small number of homicides in Canada and England and in France is due to the ac-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> curacy, the certainty and the celerity of justice as administered in those countries rather than to the form or severity of the punishment. We cannot avoid the conclusion that the sureness of detection, reflected in the number of prosecutions in proportion to crimes, the certainty of punishment reflected in the number of convictions, the celerity and accuracy of punishment, reflected in the few appeals, are the determining factors in the very low proportion of homicidal and other crimes rather than the severity of the punishment which is meted out.

But he makes no further use of this very profitable line of attack, and returns at once to a recital of homicide rates in the United States.

What after all can one expect of a man who uses statistics as Mr. Lawes does? Ten-year groups are compared with five-year groups, four-year groups appear in the same table with two-year groups, and in one table giving homicide rates, etc., for New York and Massachusetts there is this naïve little note at the bottom: "In connection with this table it should be noted that New York has a population approximately 2.7 times that of Massachusetts." The strain involved in trying to follow figures which do not follow each other must be obvious.

The strange thing is that the figures themselves reveal the presence of factors which start one to wondering.

A sudden rise in the homicide rate of a state, followed by a pronounced decline, certain parallelisms between abolition and non-abolition states, indicate that homicide rates have more behind them than the presence or absence of consequences feared. Why, for instance, do certain states consistently maintain low rates even though they haven't abolished the death penalty? If Mr. Lawes had been curious enough to seek the wherefore of those things, his book might not have arrived at its present conclusions, but his conclusions would at all events have given him more security. For until we know more about homicide rates and what causes them, we cannot rely on the simple guide he has chosen for himself.

The form of the book reveals its weakness at a glance. There is no orderly arrangement of material save paragraph headings, which instead of helping, rather emphasize in large type the confusion which prevails throughout. Yet the attempt is important, because Mr. Lawes has projected a method of studying the death penalty which is without emotional prepossessions, and which may therefore lead to answers which cannot be challenged. What the answers are, however, remains as undetermined as before.

M. D. F.

Music of the Past

Music of the Past, by Wanda Landowska. Translated from the French by William Aspinwall Bradley. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.

MANY are the stout weapons with which Wanda Landowska practises her defense of the music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. First, she seats herself at the harpischord and reproduces Lully and Couperin with utter skill and unanswerable charm for the benefit of many hundreds of hearers. Next she assembles her wide learning in their behalf in her book Music of the Past. Third she summons a sharp but genial literary style to flutter over the centuries with mocking antennae. Lastly has she found a deft translator and a sympathetic publisher to make the eight edition of her Musique d'Autrefois available for and attractive to the American public.

Thus equipped for the fray, Mme. Landowska steps up to the defense. What is her plan of campaign? She will show how history repeats itself, how every age dates the birth of music to the antecedent century, how music of an earlier date has always been damned as quaint and charming, how one generation will revel in its own vast orchestras and choruses as greatly typical of a great epoch, and laugh over similar demonstrations in the past as mere circus music.

Smiling over the first flush of a victory that her spirit of gentle irony has brought about, Mme. Landowska takes the offensive. "There is but a single style in music," she declares. The "truism of musical progress I consider the principal cause of the ignorance of our past and of all the errors in the interpretation of the old masters."

With but a slight stretch of the imagination we hear the author already dictating the terms of her peace: "Upon every concert program shall there be at least one piece of Frescobaldi, Buxtehude, or Kuhnau, and the words 'classic,' 'primitive,' and 'contemporary' shall be driven from the land."

In all this brave front, so blithely taken, there lurks, however, one weakness, one potential breach. Mme. Landowska may know more from her wide knowledge as to how Bach and Rameau sounded to their hearers than the rest of us do. She may understand the old instruments, she may have measured the old concert halls and combed over the manuscript scores. But where can she find for us a pair of seventeenth century ears?

Play Debussy after Beethoven and he will sound rare and strange. Play Debussy after Ravel and he will have become sweetly repetitious. If a few minutes of contrast can so alter the effect of the original illusion, what is to be done with the influence of two or three intervening centuries? May it not even be probable that our best chance at reproducing the effect first made on its hearers by Beethoven's symphony is by playing to a modern audience not Beethoven at all, but rather some such composition as Scriabine's Poems D'Extase? The reactions of their first auditors have been reported in much the same words.

Mme. Landowska's opponents—and the temper of her book excites a friendly and interested antagonism—do not necessarily hold that musical progress means progression from something less to something greater, they do not even use the words maturity or sophistication in upholding the idiom of today. They maintain that the idiom is necessarily different, that the musical language, like the current vocabulary, is continuously changing in response to the changed moods of expression. Some of the greatest masters, like Bach and Shakespeare, have been able to create a speech that survives many generations, but even with Bach and Shakespeare, subtle changes have crept in and our relation to the text has altered.

Mme. Landowska would have it that there is one music, contemporary to all ages in so far as it is great. We must answer her that this is true only on paper, that on the ear-drum there are many musics, music of today, tomorrow and yesterday, and we must thank her for her exposition of what we still must call music of the past.

MARY ELLIS OPDYCKE.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Grown-Ups and Children

When We Were Very Young, by A. A. Milne. New York: E. P. Dutton Company. $2.00.

DADDY, when you go to the office, may I play with my toys?"

It is the same thing, of course, with really good children's books—they are monopolized by grown-ups. There is a distinction, though, between the children's books for children and the children's books for grown-ups (though the grown-ups like both).

Here is a new book, which you can tell is a grown-up's children's book by the title, and by the fact that most of it came out in Punch, and by the introduction, which is written in what corresponds in Mr. Milne to Mr. Kipling's Just-So style. But that is really nothing against it, for it is a great book. It is a little like A Child's Garden of Verses, and a little like Peacock Pie, but mostly like nothing at all but Mr. Milne and Christopher Robin—with seductive illustrations, in lovely lippety metres and splendid crispy rhymes. Some of it is good sound nonsense with a Mother Goose flavor, and some of it is more sophisticated (but not much), and all of it is charming.

> A lion has a tail and a very fine tail,
> And so has an elephant, and so has a whale,
> And so has a crocodile, and so has a quail—
> They've all got tails but me.

It is written, obviously, by one of those persons who doesn't, all of him, grow up. That, says Mr. Milne (in the introduction) is Hoo, "one of those curious children who look four on Monday, and eight on Tuesday, and are really twenty-eight on Saturday." We hope that in the circulating library of Heaven other children like that, named Charles Kingsley, or Lewis Carroll, or Robert Louis Stevenson, have seen to getting their names down on the waiting list, for it is just the sort of book they will enjoy.

E. V.

The Indian Mind

My Brother's Face, by Dhan Gopal Mukerji. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.00.

EVERY book published with the object of reconciling the oriental and occidental philosophies of life seems but to reiterate with increasing emphasis Mr. Kipling's aphorism. Mukerji's Caste and Outcast, after its poetic and beautiful presentation of Indian life, expressed only the irritation aroused by a necessarily superficial judgment of western ideals. E. M. Forster, in A Passage to India, has achieved an impressive attitude of neutrality, a detachment apparently almost perfect—its only flaw being a disposition to damn both sides. Mr. Mukerji's latest volume practically abandons odious comparison, and presents, even more beautifully than before—with even more poetry and depth of color—Indian life and thought as revealed anew to him after thirteen years' absence in the Occident. He returns sufficiently "tainted with western materialism" to realize what the westerner would find most difficult to grasp, most grotesque even, in the Indian ideal. The complete repudiation of rational processes of thought in oriental "wisdom," based on the notion of reality as illusion—a philosophical axiom to the oriental—is incredible if not utterly ludicrous to the average occidental.

The education of a child by its mother—the ideal method according to eastern opinion—proceeds by means of fable and folklore, exclusive apparently of any specific information. The child's questions are never answered directly, but always figuratively, by parable, poetry or myth. The entire emphasis is laid on the development of imagination and the insignificance of facts, which may account for much in the oriental character hitherto bewildering to the literal-minded westerner. If one conceives Truth as uniquely the finding of intuitive "knowledge," it follows that wisdom consists in the cultivation of mental states favorable to "revelations," and "holiness" becomes a state of personal salvation by revealed truth, having nothing whatever to do with conduct. The account of the holy man whose salvation was imperilled by his succumbing to the temptation to relieve the suffering at his gates is simply an occasion of somewhat scornful mirth to the western reader, trained in the belief that the love of God is best manifested in self-forgetful service of one's fellow men. There is always, however, the story of Mary and Martha to disconcert the Christian upholders of good works as against faith—objective vs. subjective religion.

Religion we are obliged to recognize as the primary and universal interest of India—whether or not we consider this desirable from a practical point of view. Politics appears to be the subject next dearest to the heart of the educated Indian, and the Brother of Mukerji's narrative combines with his profound mysticism a militant nationalism which makes the story of his insurrectionary adventures exciting reading. He sums up the British-Indian situation with a concision and clarity of vision that revives the most tantalizing element in a western attempt at comprehension of the Indian mind. It is this recurrent flash of "insight," like the provocative promise of a unifying principle, which orientals reveal just as one despairs of any possible meeting-point of view. Mukerji portrays them, with a truth which even westerners feel intuitively, as so enormously worth understanding, if any one could translate their principles into our terms. If Caste and Outcast both fail, all we can fervently hope for is an enlightened and fluent Half-caste!

DOROTHY BACON WOOLSEY.

Contributors

CURTIS NETTELS is a member of the department of history in the University of Wisconsin.

VIDA D. SCUDDER is professor of English literature at Wellesley College and the author of Social Ideals in English Letters and Socialism and Character.

CLIVE BELL, the English art and literary critic, is a frequent contributor to the New Republic. He is the author of many works on art and artists.

HENRY B. FULLER, a frequent reviewer for the New Republic, is the author of several novels and short stories.

MARY ELLIS OPDYCKE, formerly assistant music critic of the New York Sun, is a contributor to current periodicals.

DOROTHY BACON WOOLSEY contributes book reviews and critical articles to the magazines.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED